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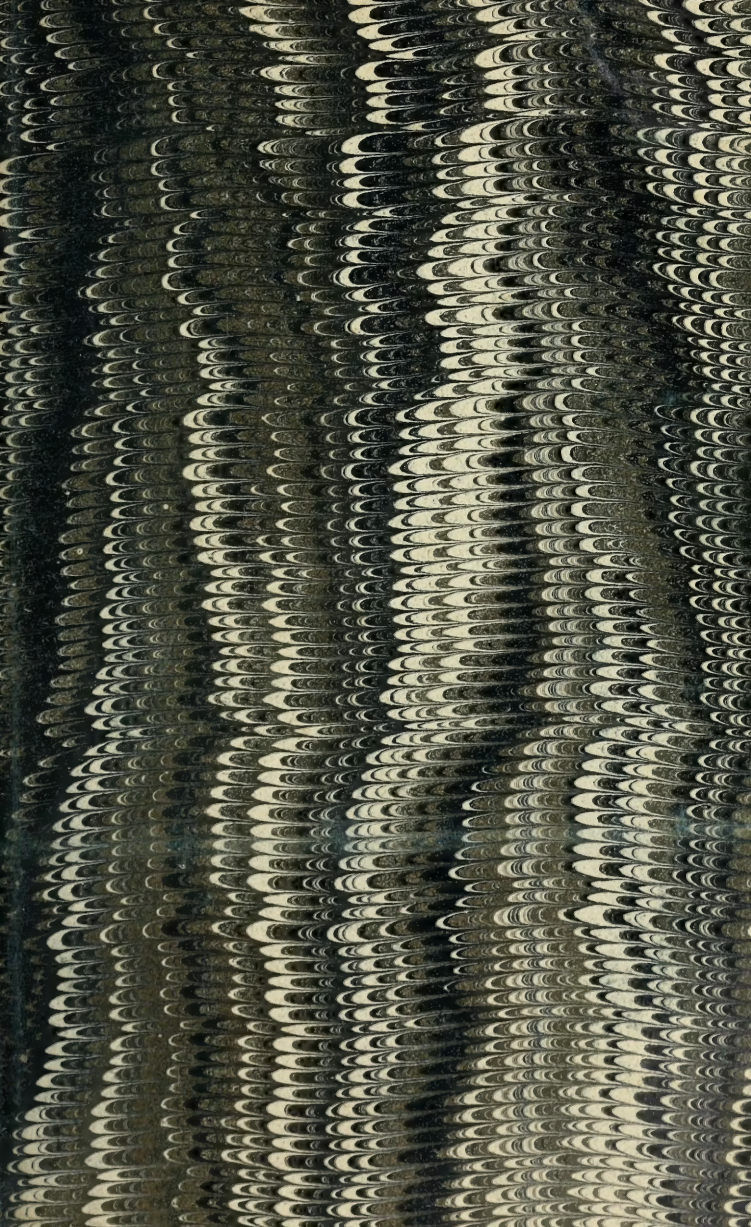
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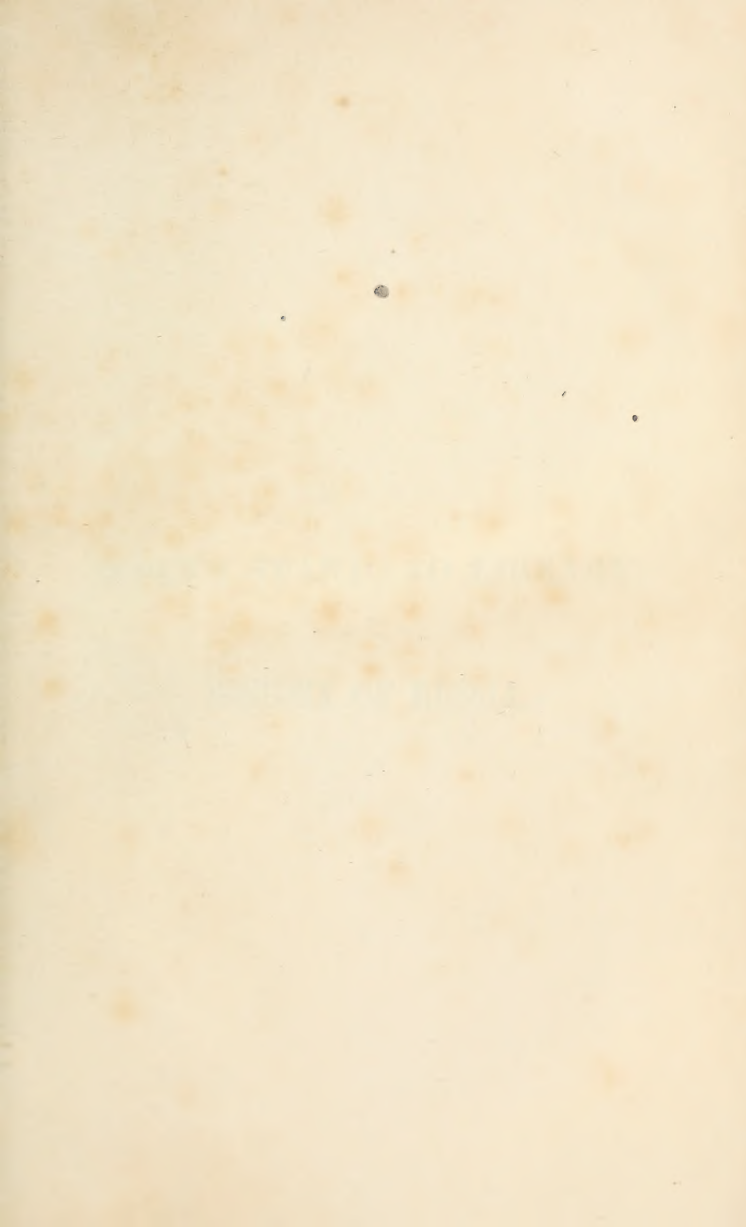
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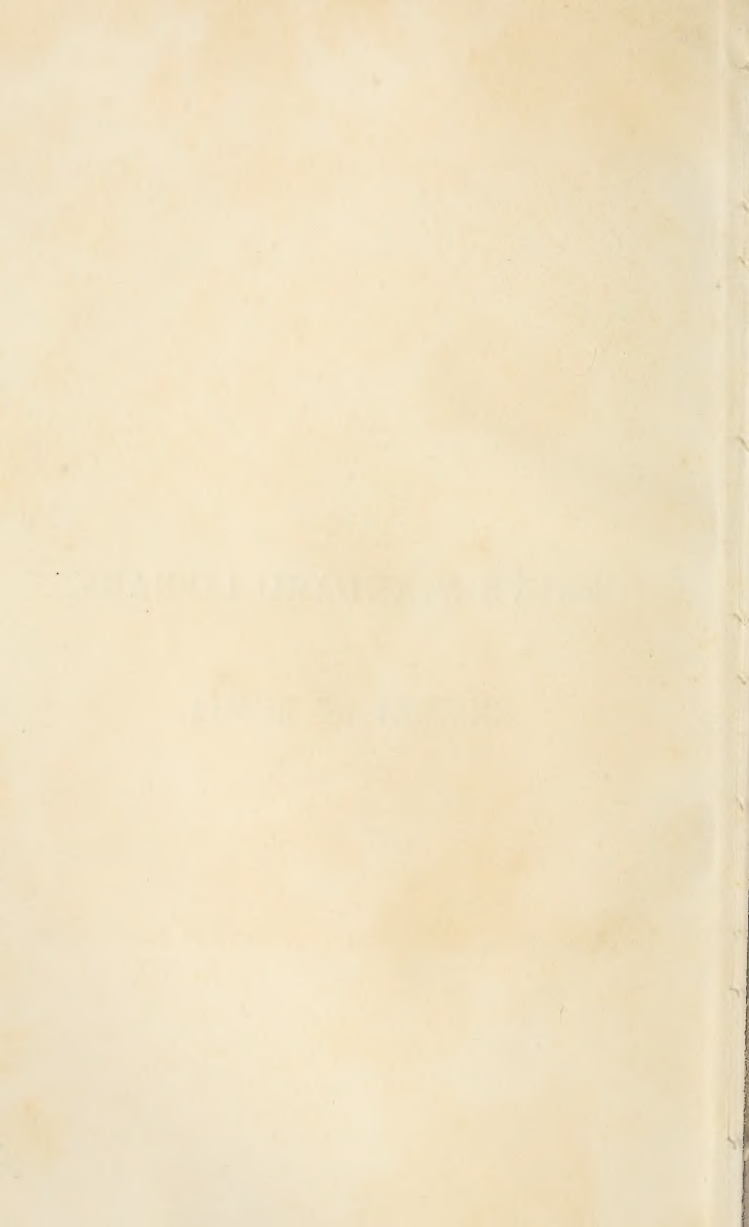





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HISTORY OF RUSSIA.







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THE  
HISTORY OF RUSSIA,

FROM THE  
EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE PRESENT TIME.

Compiled from the most Authentic Sources,  
INCLUDING THE WORKS OF  
KARAMSIN, TOOKE, AND SÉGUR.

BY  
WALTER K. KELLY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.  
VOL. II.

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MDCCCLV.



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# HISTORY OF RUSSIA.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### CORONATION OF CATHARINE—CONSPIRACIES AMONGST THE CLERGY AND THE GUARDS—COURT INTRIGUES.

THE second accounts brought from Moscow were of a more favourable complexion than the first. Brandy and money, distributed judiciously by the governor, had worked a great change in the minds of the garrison; Catharine, therefore, hastened to celebrate her coronation in that ancient capital of the empire. Attended by a numerous cavalcade, she made her entrance with great pomp; but notwithstanding the money that had been previously distributed, she too easily perceived that her presence was not welcome to the people. She nevertheless repaired to the chapel of the czars, where she lavished her flatteries on the archbishop and the popes, and was crowned in the presence of the soldiery and the courtiers. The crowd, which looked coldly on the empress, ran everywhere to welcome the grand-duke, and mingled with the emotions of tenderness they felt for the child a visible concern for the misfortunes of his father. Catharine, dissatisfied with Moscow, industriously concealed her chagrin; and returned with little delay to Petersburg.

Careful to flatter the military, who had been neglected by Peter, she published a manifesto, on the day of her coronation, in praise of the troops that had fought against Prussia, and caused a half year's pay to be given to the subalterns and common soldiers who had been present at the battles of Paltzig, Kai, Zullichau, Frankfort, or Kunersdorf. Of each of the four regiments of life-guards, the Preobajenski, Simeonofski, Ismailofski, and the horse-guards, the empress

appointed herself colonel. General-adjutant Gregory Orlof was made lieutenant-colonel of the last regiment; his brother Alexis of the first; Feodor and Vladimir Orlof of the other two.

Catharine now put off all restraint. The monks, who had long favoured her projects, and to whom she had often promised a restoration of the possessions they had been despoiled of by her husband, vainly recalled to her mind their services and her promises. She perceived that it would not be prudent to let them resume an ascendant which might prove as dangerous as it had been serviceable to her; and instead of revoking the edict of Peter III., she referred it to the examination of a synod, composed of persons implicitly subservient to her will. The principal members of the clergy were secretly brought over; the rest were sacrificed; and, animated with sacred fury, vowed revenge against their former patron.

The rage of the priests could not fail of having some effect. They fanned the embers of sedition among the populace and the soldiers. Calling to mind their prince Ivan, they ascertained that he was in St. Petersburg on the very day of the revolution; to which city Peter III. had mysteriously caused him to be brought, in the supposed design of declaring him his successor; and whence Catharine had since, not less mysteriously, had him conveyed away; and they openly said, that it was to that unhappy prince that the throne belonged. They moreover published an alleged imperial manifesto, all the copies of which the friends of Catharine had not been able to suppress. Their story was, that Peter III. had caused this document to be drawn up by the state-councillor Volkof, and had signed it with his own hand. He had therein enumerated all the faults and transgressions of Catharine; and accusing her of adultery, declared that he would not acknowledge the young grand-duke for his son, since he was the fruit of the scandalous commerce of his wife with Soltikof. This manifesto,\* composed with great force and eloquence, was artfully dispersed among the people, and soon found its way among the soldiers, who, for the most part unable to conceive in what fit of distraction they had been drawn into the rebellion, already, as we have observed,

\* Perhaps a forgery of the exasperated clergy.



repented their wickedness, and deplored the sad lot of a prince, mistaken but not malevolent, who had been barbarously put to death. Everything seemed to portend a new revolution: but Glebof, Passek, Teplof, and their emissaries were not blind to all these proceedings. Suddenly an imperial proclamation came forth, forbidding the soldiers of the guards to assemble without orders received from their officers. Some of the most violent were imprisoned, and suffered the punishment of the knout; others were banished into Siberia: terror for some time kept the rest in silence.

By thus chastising the regiments of the guards, the empress thought she should also shut the mouths of the priests. She refused even to temporise with the courtiers who displeased her, and who thought they had just claims to her gratitude. Ivan Shuvalof, if he had not taken part in the conspiracy, had at least promoted it beforehand by calumniating Peter III., and after it broke out he became its approver and supporter. By flattering the propensities of Catharine, he hoped to find that easy access with her which the empress Elizabeth had granted him. Shuvalof was mistaken. He awakened the jealousy of Orlof; Catharine sent him word that his presence was not necessary at court; then, adding derision to harshness, she made him a present, as the reward of his services, of an old negro, who played the part of a buffoon about the palace.

Villebois, the master of the ordnance, whose personal affection for her had seduced him from the path of duty, now paid the forfeit of his mistake. Orlof was afraid of his talents, and wanted his place. Villebois was dismissed, and the favourite appointed grand master of the ordnance. Even the princess Dashkof found her pretensions slighted, and made no secret of her resentment. This was reported to the empress: and the princess received orders to retire to Moscow. At the same time Catharine commissioned the Piedmontese Odart to engage the ambassador of France to write to Voltaire, cautioning him to be on his guard against the vanity of princess Dashkof, and to tell him, that if he should transmit to posterity the event that had just happened in Russia, he need only make mention of this young woman as having acted a very secondary part in a revolution, the

success whereof was owing solely to the wisdom and courage of the empress.\* The same commission was given to her ambassadors at London and at Paris.†

The archbishop of Novgorod, one of the principal instruments in the revolution, and who had the most assisted in diminishing the privileges of the monks, having been gained over by money and promises, found all at once that his towering hopes were frustrated. When Catharine had no longer any need of his services, she presently dismissed him; and he was obliged to take back with him his rage and disgrace to a clergy who hated him, and a people who despised his ambition.

In the mean time Poniatowski had learned, with inexpressible joy, the triumph of Catharine. Since his expulsion from St. Petersburg, in consequence of his detected intrigue with the grand-duchess, he had kept up a regular correspondence with her; whilst she, though in secret consoling herself for his absence, openly affected a romantic constancy in her attachment to him. Perhaps Poniatowski flattered himself that he should soon be honoured with the hand of her whose heart he imagined had long been his. He advanced to the frontiers of Poland, and sent to ask permission to pay a visit to her majesty. But she returned him for answer, that his presence was not necessary at Petersburg; and that she had different views in his behalf. Unwilling that he should be further informed of her new connexions, she continued to write to him in an affectionate style, and sometimes shed tears before the confidants of the Pole, in speaking of her passion for him. She complained that an inclination for Orlof was attributed to her, and affected to treat the imputation with ridicule.

But the period of fears was past. Orlof had done with mystery. Haughty and coarse in his manners, that favourite but awkwardly submitted to dissimulation; and he now made it appear that he had no longer occasion for an irksome pre-

\* M. de Breteuil rather went beyond his commission, by adding in his letter: "C'est pousser bien loin la jalousie et la hardiesse de l'ingratitude."

† Upwards of five-and-twenty years after that event, Catharine held the same language to the English minister at her court. It was her earnest desire that the history of her life and reign should have been undertaken by the historian of Charles V. Various suggestions

caution. Accustomed to live in the barracks and cabaks,\* Orlof at times would drink pretty freely. One evening, being at supper with the empress, the hetman Razumofsky, and some others of the court, and being flushed with wine, he talked of the ascendant he had over the guards; he boasted of having solely brought about the revolution; and added, that his power was so great, that if he chose to abuse it, he could in one month destroy his own work, and dethrone the empress. "You might do so in one month," returned the hetman, smiling at his insolence; "but, my friend, within a fortnight after we should have hanged you!"

Catharine was attached to her favourite as much by policy as affection. She knew his activity, vehemence, and boldness, and she preferred him to courtiers doubtless more accomplished, but almost all without talents and courage. Less gracious towards the other conspirators, who were only subaltern officers, and whom she had already sufficiently rewarded, she removed them by degrees from the court, leaving them to return to their obscure libertinism. It may be that she would have done better to have kept on the mask a little longer.

The chastisement of the soldiers who were the first in the mutiny had not entirely quelled the spirit of revolt. The removal of the archbishop of Novgorod and princess Dashkof, the unsettled health of the young grand-duke, the pity shown by all ranks of people for prince Ivan, all furnished a handle to discontents, which the popes dexterously employed for inciting and irritating the people. There was a general fermentation in the barracks. The danger became even so imminent, that her majesty was thought, during a whole day,† to be in extreme hazard of experiencing the fate of her husband. But her courage never forsook her. Without calling her council, she took private measures for calming the revolt; and when Razumofsky, Bestujef, Panin, Glebof, with several other members of the senate, presented themselves to her, to testify their uneasiness, she haughtily

were at several times given to that effect, and transmitted to Scotland; and all the necessary papers and documents were to have been furnished by herself.

\* Tippling-houses frequented by the lower orders of people.

† It was some time after her return from Moscow.

replied: "Why are you alarmed? Think ye that I am afraid to face the danger, or know not how to overcome it? Recollect that you have seen me, in moments more terrible than these, in full possession of the whole vigour of my mind; and that I can support the most cruel reverses of fortune with as much serenity as I have supported her favours. A few factious spirits, a few mutinous soldiers, are to deprive me of a crown that I accepted with reluctance,\* and only as the means of delivering the Russian nation from the miseries with which it was threatened! I know not with what pretence they colour their insolence, or on what means they rely; but, I say again, they cause me no alarm. That Providence which has called me to reign, will preserve me for the glory and the happiness of the empire; and that almighty arm which has hitherto been my defence, will now confound my foes."

The Orlofs, in the mean time, neglected nothing to pacify the guards; and money softened those whom fair words could not appease. When their fidelity was again secured, four-and-twenty of their officers were arrested and tried. The four principal ringleaders were declared guilty of high treason, and condemned to be quartered. But Catharine, thinking that more benefit was likely to accrue from a signal act of clemency, commuted their punishment into banishment to Siberia. Wishing, at the same time, to inspire the Russians in some degree with that dread of infamy which had so much influence in other nations, she caused the four officers to receive each a blow from the hand of the common executioner.

While Catharine was thus managing her subjects, she displayed a proud bearing towards foreign courts. The ambassador of France solicited from her in vain a *reversal* similar to those granted by Elizabeth and Peter III. at their accession to the throne, the purport of which was to prove that the title of empress changed absolutely nothing in the ceremonial between the two courts. She persisted in refusing it, notwithstanding the difficulties it might occasion.† She

\* It is certain that Catharine expressed herself in these very terms, and that even in the presence of some of her accomplices.—*Castera*.

† These difficulties were not the only ones M. de Breteuil had with Catharine: and it may not be useless to mention the grave minutiae in



declared, indeed, that the ceremonial should not be changed; but that there should never more be any reversal at the commencement of a new reign. Nevertheless, she gave secret instructions to several of her ambassadors to take precedence of that of France, whenever occasion should offer.\*

The empress, always combining policy with firmness, found means to soothe the most dangerous of the priests, and to put a stop to the cabals of the monks. She recalled to court princess Dashkof, whose influence at Moscow might disturb the tranquillity of the empire. She sent away the Piedmontese Odart, whose espionage had rendered him odious to all the court. She purchased the trumpets of fame; her praise was resounded from one end of Europe to the other, and reverberated to Petersburg. The health of the young grand-duke was re-established. The dawning hope inspired by that prince, diverted attention from the prison of the unfortunate Ivan; but the Russians could not yet accommodate themselves to a yoke which they desired in vain to shake off.

Ambition did not extinguish the love of pleasure in the breast of Catharine. It was even by the latter that she more closely attached the courtiers to her interest; but she could quit her pleasures to engage in the most serious affairs, and apply to the most arduous concerns of government. She assisted at all the deliberations of the council, read the despatches from her ambassadors, either dictated or minuted with her own hand the answers that were to be sent to them, and afterwards attended to all the particulars of their execution. She practised those maxims which she frequently cited: "We should be steadfast in our plans; it is better to do amiss, than to alter our purpose. None but fools are irresolute."

which ambassadors are sometimes employed. The custom was, that women as well as men kissed the hand of the empress. M. de Breteuil had the vanity to insist that his lady, rather than conform to that custom, should abstain from appearing at court. He made several remonstrances on this subject. Catharine held out; and that madame de Breteuil might not die of vexation in her hotel, the ambassador was obliged to submit. However, by a grand stroke of policy, he directed his lady not to kiss her majesty's hand, but only to pretend to do so.

\* A dispute happened in consequence between the duc de Châtelet and count Tchernitchef, ambassador from Russia to the court of London, in which the former struck the latter with his sword.

Catharine continued to be disquieted by incessant repetitions of petty conspiracies. They were detected, indeed, and defeated; but it was impossible to annihilate their primary cause. Some of them arose in a very curious manner out of the mutual jealousy of the arch intriguers, Panin and Bestujef. The former was impatient at finding that he enjoyed but a secondary influence. His thoughts were always turned on the aristocratic senate he had wanted Peter III. to establish; and he seized every opportunity for displaying the pretended advantages of this institution before those with whom he conversed. Observing, on some occasion, that Catharine seemed to be under an extraordinary alarm, he thought it a favourable moment for inducing her to adopt his project. After exaggerating to her the dangers to which she was exposed, and the difficulty of avoiding the troubles inseparable from a usurpation, he added, that there was one way still of escaping them, and of immovably fixing her throne. Catharine bade him explain. Thereupon he represented to her that the greatest dangers to the sovereigns of Russia lay in the very fact that their power was unlimited, since that power was always liable to be usurped by some bold pretender, who would thenceforth be above the laws. In fine, he urged her to renounce her absolute authority, and create a permanent council, the members of which should be independent of the crown: in other words, he advised her to humble herself beneath an oligarchy like that which tyrannised over king and people in Sweden.

Catharine, who could so well dissemble, desired Panin to commit his precious scheme to paper, and present it to her, and expressed herself in such a manner as to lead him to imagine that she meant to put it in execution. He lost no time in obeying her commands; and in order more effectually to secure its success, he placed the name of Gregory Orlof at the head of those whom he destined to compose the new senate. The favourite seemed flattered with this distinction, but requested time to consider upon it; and before he gave answer to Panin, he consulted Bestujef. The ex-chancellor was too sensible of the value of a power which he had long directed, not to be shocked at the idea of seeing it drop from the hands of Catharine. He presented himself immediately

to her majesty, expatiated with energy on the perils that accompanied the measure to which Panin was endeavouring to persuade her, and conjured her, very superfluously we imagine, not to expose herself to a long repentance, by dividing an authority which she had acquired with so much trouble, and which she would never recover if she suffered it to be wrested from her but for a single instant.

Panin was sorely disappointed at his next audience. The empress commended his zeal and sagacity, but declared it impossible to adopt the advice he had tendered her. The mortified minister guessed that it was to Bestujef alone he owed the defeat of his enterprise; and he found an opportunity to retaliate upon him, by defeating in his turn a scheme which that ambitious old man had formed to render himself more necessary.

As everything concurred to evince the great influence of Orlof, and Catharine seemed no longer desirous to conceal it, the artful courtier insinuated to the favourite how glad he should be to see him emperor. Orlof listened with the most profound attention. Presumptuous and volatile, he fancied himself for a moment on the throne of the czars; and embracing Bestujef, gave him plenary powers to act in the matter in his behalf. Bestujef had an audience the same day of the empress, and artfully sounded her on the subject. But Catharine, after much hesitation, concluded by telling the ex-chancellor, that, however she might be inclined to favour his proposal, she could never resolve upon taking a step that might meet with so many difficulties; and that, on mature consideration, she saw no way of making the attempt without giving umbrage to the whole empire.

The ex-chancellor engaged to find out the means. He ingeniously composed, in the name of the Russian nation, a petition, wherein, after a pompous eulogium of all that the empress had done for the glory and the happiness of her people, he called to mind the weak constitution of the young Paul Petrovitch, and the disquietudes caused by the frequent alterations in his health; and conjured Catharine to give the empire an additional testimony of her love, by sacrificing her own liberty to its welfare in taking a spouse.

In order to conceal his real intentions from those who, as he designed, should promote them, Bestujef began by proposing prince Ivan, being sure that all those who should sign the petition would reject that unfortunate captive. At the same time, Catharine, who, sometimes gave the old courtier room to believe she was under his guidance, affecting to approve this proposal, and being afraid too that Ivan might suddenly be taken from prison and crowned, caused him to be conveyed from the castle of Shlusselburg, and lodged in a monastery at Kolmogor, not far from Archangel; where, as though it had been intended to make him more sensible to the misfortune that awaited him, he was treated at first with the honours due to his rank, but was soon carried back very secretly to Shlusselburg castle.

What the old chancellor had foreseen failed not to happen. On his presenting the petition to the clergy, twelve bishops, previously gained over, eagerly put their signatures to it, specifying that Catharine ought not to marry prince Ivan, because he might punish her for her benefactions, and pretend to stand indebted for the crown to his proper right alone. At the same time they requested that her majesty would condescend to choose, from among her subjects, him whom she should think the most worthy to share her throne. A great number of general officers adhered to the sentiment of the bishops. But for the dexterity of Panin, and the courage of the hetman Razumofsky, and the chancellor Vorontzof, Bestujef's stratagem would have succeeded, and Gregory Orlof been emperor of all the Russias.

Count Panin engaged Razumofsky and Vorontzof to represent to Catharine how humiliating the projected union would be, and how dangerous to her. They did so. Catharine affected extreme surprise; thanked the remonstrants for their loyal zeal, but protested that the idea of the marriage they so much dreaded had never once entered her mind; that it was positively without her knowledge that such an odious intrigue had been carried on; and that, as Bestujef was the author of it, she would resent it on him. Nevertheless, she took care not to be severe with the old man, who had only sought to gratify her secret inclinations.

Bestujef thus saw his project fail without apparently receiving any shock to his influence. He was, on the con-



trary, every day better received by the empress and the favourite, while Vorontzof experienced from them nothing but coldness, and was glad to prevent a forced retreat by a voluntary exile.

In the mean time, the apprehension of seeing Catharine bestow herself on the daring adventurer who had lent a hand to precipitate her unfortunate husband from the throne, occasioned violent murmurs. Several ineffectual plots were set on foot against her and her favourite. One of them for a moment was on the point of succeeding. A guard stood at Orlof's door, as at that of the empress. One of the sentinels had promised, for a bribe, to deliver him asleep to three of the conspirators. But the hour was wrongly marked; and when the conspirators appeared, the sentinel who was to have seconded them, had already been relieved by another. This latter, astonished at seeing three men apply for admission into Orlof's apartment, made so much noise as to bring together others of the guards. The conspirators had but just time to escape under favour of the uniform they wore.

This movement spread alarm over the palace. Catharine was roused. Imagining that her life was not in safety at Moscow, she hastened to quit that city, and return to St. Petersburg. The day of her departure was signalised by demonstrations of insolent joy approaching to rage. Her cypher had been placed on a triumphal arch in the great place of Moscow: the populace tore it down, and broke it to pieces after having dragged it through the mire.

Catharine arrived at St. Petersburg the day of the anniversary of her accession to the throne, and she omitted nothing that could render her entry magnificent and imposing. The pompous spectacle, however, raised more astonishment than joy, and tended only to increase the irritation of the public mind. The number of malcontents augmented. Conspiracies were multiplied, and became more dangerous by the names of consequence that were associated to them. Public report counted among the enemies of Catharine the most powerful personages of the empire, and even some who had served her with the utmost zeal. The hetman Razumofsky, count Panin, and his brother,\* were of this number; and it seemed

\* General Panin, brother of the minister, gained considerable reputation in the first Turkish war.

certain that if these different conspirators could have turned their eyes on a prince worthy of being the object of their wishes, Catharine would have lost the crown. But some wanted to raise Paul Petrovitch to the throne, while others were desirous of recalling the unhappy Ivan; and all embarrassed, all irresolute, they coincided only in the plan of de-throning the empress, without agreeing on her successor.

Catharine, secretly advertised of the design of Panin and of Razumofsky, was for a moment ready to have them arrested: but having only such evidence as was but little to be relied on, and suspicions in which she might be deceived, she felt, after all, that by an ill-timed severity against men of such high consideration, she ran the risk of occasioning a general insurrection. She thought it might be expedient to employ a little artifice: a means which had frequently been of use to her. She had repaid with seeming ingratitude the services of princess Dashkof, and even since she had been forced to recal her to court, had behaved to her with sufficient coolness; she now feigned all at once a wish to restore her to her confidence; and in a very long and most gracious letter, conjured her, in the name of their long friendship, to reveal what she knew of the recent conspiracies; assuring her, at the same time, that she would grant a full pardon to all concerned. The princess, nettled that Catharine should think to make of her an instrument of her vengeance, as she had made her that of her elevation, replied in no more than four lines to the four pages she had received from the empress. This was her answer: "Madam, I have heard nothing: but if I had heard anything, I should take good care how I spoke of it. What is it you require of me? That I should expire on a scaffold? I am ready to mount it."

Astonished at so much haughtiness, and not hoping to conquer it, Catharine attempted to attach to her those whom she dared not to punish. Some of the subaltern conspirators, who had been arrested, and yet kept an obstinate silence on their accomplices, were banished to Siberia: but Panin and Razumofsky received several additional marks of favour. However, as treasonable plots incessantly sprang up, and clemency, hitherto shown towards the guilty, seemed to harden them in crimes, Catharine declared, that in future she would not conform to the edict by which the empress

Elizabeth had promised that no criminal should be condemned to death. She supposed that the Russians were, unhappily, not to be influenced but by the dread of punishment. She saw, afterwards, that they were not restrained by a principle of fear ; but with all her intellectual acumen, she wanted that wisdom of the heart that would have revealed to her the means of inspiring her people with true loyalty.

Catharine, however, omitted nothing that promised to contribute to the wealth and grandeur of her empire. At that very time, when she had the greatest reason to be apprehensive for her safety, her mind was applied to the details of government with as much assiduity as if her reign were to last for ever. She founded colleges and endowed hospitals ; encouraged commerce and rewarded industry ; enlarged her navy, and put new ships upon the stocks. Perceiving that the population of her states was not equal to their vast extent, and that her most fertile provinces, for want of hands, produced but slender crops, she published a declaration, inviting foreigners to settle in Russia. She promised them considerable advantages, and a free toleration of religious opinions ; with permission to leave the country when they pleased, and carry away with them such riches as they might acquire in it, upon condition of giving up a part to the public treasury. It was, doubtless, of little importance to Catharine, that those who wished to settle in her dominions were of a religion different from her own ; provided they proved themselves industrious and peaceable citizens. As to the riches which she promised to let them carry off, she well knew that men who have taken up their residence in foreign countries, seldom have the resolution to quit the spots whence they have derived their opulence.

During a part of this year Catharine often shut herself up in the palace, and sometimes stole away from the court to such of her country seats as were the least frequented. In these trips she was accompanied only by two or three trusty confidants. Though the publicity of her connexion with Orlof appeared to give her no concern, she endeavoured to conceal her pregnant state ; and feigning an indisposition, in order to disappear for some days, she gave birth to a son, afterwards known as count Bobrinsky.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

CATHARINE'S RELATIONS WITH THE NORTHERN POWERS—  
COURLAND—POLAND—SECRET TREATY WITH PRUSSIA—  
ELECTION OF STANISLAUS PONIATOWSKI—TRAGICAL DEATH  
OF THE EMPEROR IVAN.

By the time that Catharine had become secure upon her throne, Russia again obtained great influence in Sweden, but lost it afterwards through the revolution effected by Gustavus. As for Denmark, Catharine did not molest that power either with her fleets or her armies; but she was artful enough to keep it in suspense between the dread of seeing the Russian troops again on the march for Holstein, and the hope of obtaining the total cession of that coveted duchy, as it subsequently did by the treaties of 1767 and 1773. Poland was dependent upon Russia as early as the time of Peter the Great; and after the death of king Augustus II., even the appearance of political independence was lost to a kingdom which was sold by its nobles. The case of Courland first furnished the empress with an opportunity of despoiling Poland in the midst of peace. This will be best understood by casting a glance at the course which had been pursued with Courland from the times of Peter the Great, who ordered it to be taken possession of by Russian troops in the name of Anne, his niece.

When the ducal race of Kettler was drawing near its extinction, the Poles first began to take measures for uniting the duchy with their kingdom, as had been previously settled by express treaties. In the sixteenth century the Poles recognised the secularisation of the ecclesiastical estates and foundations in Courland, and the change of the spiritual lords into a temporal aristocracy, and guaranteed their protection to Gotthold Kettler as duke and feudatory of Poland only on condition that, in case of the extinction of the house of Kettler, the duchy should be incorporated with their



kingdom, and be divided into palatinates like Poland. When the last duke forsook his religion and his country, and the whole race was on the eve of extinction, the Courland nobles were anxious to escape from the terms of the bond. With this view they called in the natural son of Augustus II. to their aid, who became afterwards so renowned as a French marshal. Count Maurice of Saxony was acknowledged by the Poles and the Courlanders, but was prevented by the Russians from taking possession of the duchy destined for him, and the Russian troops kept possession of the territory which had been formerly governed by Peter's niece as the widow of the last duke. This duchess Anne no sooner became empress of Russia, than the republic of Poland and their king Augustus, or his minister Brühl, were compelled to recognise the Russian power as a right.

The empress continued to annoy and harass the nobility of Courland until they were at length constrained to elect her favourite Biren as their duke: this choice was also sanctioned by Augustus III. after the death of the last of the Kettlers. The Poles entirely gave up all claims to the incorporation of Courland with their kingdom, and only required that the duke, who had been appointed by Russia, should receive the territory as a fief of Poland. Biren accordingly, by his plenipotentiary, sought and obtained the investment in Warsaw in June, 1739. His overthrow, which took place shortly afterwards, and his exile to Pelim in Siberia, could not deprive him of his right to an independent duchy, which was even acknowledged as a fief of Poland by the Russians themselves; but to this they paid no attention whatever. His effects in Mittau, Libau, and Windau were sealed up, and his feudal superior, Augustus III., interested himself in his favour in vain. The guardians of the unfortunate Ivan III., whom Anne had appointed her heir, and especially Anthony Ulrich of Brunswick, were determined to force upon the acceptance of the Courlanders prince Louis of Brunswick—the same who was afterwards called the Brunswick monster of Holland, whither he fled. This plan was frustrated by the revolution of November, 1741, by which Elizabeth was raised to the throne. This empress for a long time gave no indication of her views respecting Courland, but there was



nothing whatever said of Biren, although Elizabeth suffered him to go from Pelim to Jaroslav. The Russian troops continued to retain possession of Courland, and the government of the duchy received their commands directly from Petersburg. The revenues were one while the prey of the Russian officials, and at another were sent to Russia under the pretence of liquidating Biren's debts. At length it appeared as if Elizabeth was desirous of leaving her share of the spoil to the family of king Augustus III., although she had hitherto paid not the slightest attention to the application of the king of Poland and the petitions of the Courlanders in favour of Biren.

In the beginning of the seven years' war, Augustus III. sent his third son, prince Charles of Saxony, to Petersburg. The empress was very much pleased with the young prince, and in order to show her favourable disposition towards him, caused it to be made publicly known that Biren should never again be recognised as duke of Courland. She herself then requested the king of Poland to invest his son Charles with the fief of the duchy, and her ministers, Gross and Simolin, in November, 1758, urged the senate of Poland to support their king in this affair. Prince Charles was in fact invested with the duchy with the full consent of the senate; but neither the grand-duke, who was heir to the throne, nor his wife, acknowledged the legality of the investment. The grand-duke, who only thought of Holstein, when he became Peter III. was anxious to confer the duchy upon one of his own relations, a prince of the Holstein family: prince Charles, however, was now in actual possession of the territory. Peter recalled Biren from Jaroslav to the court, and restored him all that was still remaining of his vast wealth, but at the same time declared to him expressly, that he would never replace him in possession of Courland. He gave him indeed a promise of compensation. Catharine II., however, no sooner came to the throne than she declared herself favourable to Biren's claims, and founded her support upon the fact that king Augustus, at the investment of his son, instead of following the counsel of 128 senators, and appealing to the constitution of 1736, which conferred on him the privilege of nominating the duke of Courland, rested his decision solely

upon the Russian exclusion of Biren, whose right, moreover, he acknowledged.

Catharine was in a condition to give complete effect to her wishes without having recourse to any extraordinary means; for the Russians had still kept possession of Courland, and had even regarded the whole of Poland as a Russian province during the seven years' war. The whole administration of the country had been usurped by the Russians, who quartered their armies upon the people, entered into contracts and raised contributions, and remained there even after the conclusion of the peace. Two thousand men stationed at Graudenz held the Poles in awe, and fifteen thousand marched to Courland, to drive out prince Charles, if necessary, by force of arms. The treasuries were sealed up, all payments prevented, all the public offices taken possession of, and the duke, cut off from all resources and supplies, was besieged in his own house as if it had been a fortress. Charles, however, relying upon Polish protection and support, continued in Mittau, with a view to call together the nobility of the duchy, when Biren came to Riga, in order from that city to summon an assembly of the estates. On this occasion every legal and diplomatic form was carefully observed, in order that at least that might not have the appearance of being done which was done in reality. Kayserling was first directed to employ every possible means, as he went through Mittau to Warsaw, to induce prince Charles to give way; the estates of his partisans were next seized upon, and his own archives, houses, and stores were occupied by soldiers, whilst the Courlanders endeavoured to shelter themselves under the form, that the decree for summoning the estates could only be issued from some place within the territory itself, and not from Riga, where Biren was then staying. This objection, however, was removed by Biren's coming to Mittau, although Charles still remained in the city, and thence issuing the summonses, on the 25th of January, 1763, for a general assembly of the estates.

The estates accordingly met; Charles, who was in some measure a prisoner in his own house in Mittau, insisted that his father, who had invested him with the duchy, was the only person who had the right to recal the grant; but Simo-

lin, Catharine's agent, commanded the estates to administer the public affairs in Biren's name. There were now two dukes residing in Mittau at the same time, one under the protection of the Russians, the other as their prisoner; and the estates of the country, as well as the Polish senators who had been sent for Charles's protection, found themselves in a very singular position. The Russians, who were in fact and by force of arms masters of the country, commanded the estates to acknowledge Biren alone as duke; whilst the Poles, to whom the feudal supremacy belonged both by right and agreement, ordered them not to recognise Biren's claim, but to maintain that of prince Charles. The king of Poland, it is true, was desirous of summoning an extraordinary diet; but this project was prevented by Kayserling's intrigues among the venal Polish magnates, and the threat of ordering still larger bodies of Russian troops to march into the duchy. Nothing, however, was really effected on the part of the Saxon prince, and Courland fell a prey to the tyrannical domination of Biren, whose title to Courland was also recognised by the king of Prussia, to whom he had ceded a portion of his Silesian possessions. The Polish deputies, who had been sent in the name of the senate to Charles, were ready to draw their swords in his cause, but all was of no avail. The amount of the Russian forces in the country was continually increased, and as king Augustus' health became more and more precarious, they made preparations for advancing into Lithuania also; the king, therefore, at length recalled his son from Mittau. Biren, whose mode of government was exactly like that of an Indian nabob or rajah, was looked upon by the Russians precisely in the same light as the English view their vassal kings in India; he tyrannised under their protection. In this way he prepared the Courlanders for their approaching annexation to Russia; they had, in fact, nothing to lose, but must necessarily gain by this event.

Poland was completely ruled by the Russian minister Kayserling in Warsaw. As long as the quirks of the law, refined cunning, chicanery, and bribery, were alone required, Kayserling needed no assistance: but when rudeness and brutality were to be called into use, Repnin was immediately employed. Repnin was Panin's nephew, and afterwards

gained a considerable military reputation. During the seven years' war, when he acted as the military representative commissioned by the Russian government, he usually spent the summer in the French camp and the winter in Paris, where he had been fully initiated into all the corruptions and licentiousness of the times of Pompadour and Du Barry. His uncle Panin, in the time of the terrible Orlofs, endeavoured to cover the numerous faults of the empress with the tinsel of glory, and Frederick II. anxiously sought for one power in Europe which would enter into a close alliance with himself; these two circumstances brought Russia and Prussia half-way towards a mutual good understanding.

The contests among the great Polish families, and their connexion with foreign princes, had never ceased; but after the death of king Augustus III. the Poles, who were supported by the French on the one side, and those who were in the pay of the Russians on the other, carried on an open war. The Czartorinskis, Oginskis, and Poniatowskis were in the Russian interest, the Radzivils and Branitzkis in that of France; and the two parties, supported by regular armies, took the field against each other. At this time the Russians were in Courland, had a small garrison in Graudenz, and they collected another army on the frontiers of Poland shortly before the king's death, which took place in October, 1763, and was followed by a whole year of complete anarchy; for it is impossible to give any other name to the intermediate government which professed to rule the country from the death of one king till the election of a successor. Even the election of a new sovereign would necessarily prove insufficient to stay this anarchy if he were a man without seriousness, dignity, wealth, and a great number of partisans in the kingdom; and such a man the Russians were desirous of placing upon the throne of Poland. It was flattering to the pride of the empress, that one of her old personal favourites, and the most insipid of them all, should be elected. It was also quite in accordance with the policy of her minister, since this event would furnish him with an opportunity of showing that the empress could make her creatures kings, and also that a Russian minister was a more powerful man than a king of Poland.



Stanislaus Poniatowski was the suitor for the throne whom the Russians favoured, and it was at that time generally believed that this favour was shown because he had been the paramour of the empress, then grand-duchess; but it soon appeared that he was elected because he was an accomplished courtier, and neither a statesman nor a warrior. Stanislaus was born to be a high chamberlain or court marshal, or to fill some such office, but he possessed none of the qualities befitting a king. He had made himself master of all the arts and details of ceremony and levees, and was able to converse admirably in various languages upon the newest and most fashionable music, the poets or artists who were in vogue, upon decorations, operas, plays, and actresses; but every manly virtue, every thought worthy of a noble mind, was foreign to his nature.

In order to secure the election of Stanislaus, Catharine at length made approaches to an understanding with the king of Prussia, with whom, up till this time, she had shown a disinclination to enter into any close alliance. Frederick immediately recalled his minister Golz from Petersburg, because he did not possess the confidence either of Catharine or Panin, and sent in his stead count Solms, who concluded a defensive alliance between Russia and Prussia for eight years, and which Catharine II., after she had attained her object, was with great difficulty prevailed upon to renew for a similar period. This was that unholy alliance which, from 1764 till the present day, has proved the source of all the misfortunes of the European nations, because it has served as a model for all the treaties which have been since concluded, by means of which the fate and internal administration of the weaker states have become wholly dependent on the compacts and arms of powerful foreign nations. This first treaty was against the Poles; and those by which it has been followed, and which have been drawn up after its model, have been concluded against the liberties of the nations; and in this way the seeds of discontent and discord between the governed and those who govern have continued to grow and fructify till the present day. As soon as the rights of the bayonet were once made good against Poland and Turkey, they were also regarded as good against the free-



dom and rights of the people. The oppressed have gnashed their teeth in despair, and waited for the visitations of the divine vengeance, which has followed close upon the footsteps of those insolent and tyrannical oppressors of five-and-twenty years, and will one day overtake them, as sure as the world is under the superintendence of an overruling Providence.

The public conditions of the treaty concluded between Russia and Prussia in April, 1764, contained nothing surprising or offensive; the two parties pledged themselves to maintain each other in the possession of their present territories (which was very important for Prussia with respect to Silesia), and agreed, in case of an attack upon either, reciprocally to furnish 10,000 infantry and 1000 cavalry as auxiliaries. In case Russia should be attacked by the Turks, or Prussia by the French, a yearly contribution in money was to be substituted for the auxiliary troops. The real virus of this treaty, from which sprang all the evils that have afflicted and desolated Europe from that time till the present day, is pressed into a secret article, which we subjoin:

“It being for the interest of his majesty the king of Prussia and of her majesty the empress of all the Russias, to exert their utmost care and all their efforts for maintaining the republic of Poland in its state of free election, and that it should not be permitted to any one to render the said kingdom hereditary in his family, or to make himself absolute therein; his majesty the king of Prussia and her imperial majesty have promised and mutually engage themselves, in the most solemn manner, by this secret article, not only not to permit any one, whoever he be, to attempt to divest the republic of its right of free election, to render the kingdom hereditary, or to make himself absolute therein, in all cases whenever such attempt should be made; but also to prevent and to frustrate, by all possible means, and in common consent, the views and designs that have a tendency to that end, as soon as they shall be discovered, and even, in case of necessity, to recur to the force of arms, to defend the republic from the overthrow of its constitution and its fundamental laws.

“The present secret article shall have the same force and

vigour as if it had been inserted word for word in the principal treaty of defensive alliance signed this day, and shall be ratified at the same time.

“In virtue whereof two similar copies of it have been made, which we, the ministers plenipotentiary of his majesty the king of Prussia and of her majesty the empress of all the Russias, authorised to that purpose, have signed and sealed with the seal of our arms.

“Done at St. Petersburg, the 11th of April (the 31st of March, O.S.), 1764.

“C. DE SOLMS. PANIN. GALITZIN.”

The king, whose election had been promoted by this treaty, had no other dependence for his support than a reliance upon foreign aid; for he was held in no estimation by the Polish nobility, who constituted what they denominated the republic. The Polish nobles were divided into four classes, the highest of which was composed of the first families, who were in possession of principalities, and had the right of maintaining a standing army; the second class possessed waiwodships, starosties, and bishoprics; the third, castles and special jurisdictions; and the fourth, which was very numerous, was proud, but in a servile condition, dependent, and partly as poor as beggars.

Stanislaus Poniatowski was indebted for the distinction which he enjoyed to a fortunate marriage which his father had contracted, by means of which he became nephew to the high chancellor Czartorinski, who, together with his nephew of the same name, stood at the head of the Polish government. The high chancellor was, moreover, in doubt whether he should decide in favour of his son-in-law Oginski or his nephew Poniatowski, but in either case the government would continue to be in the hands of the two Czartorinskis, because, although Oginski and Poniatowski, according to Rulhière's account, emulated each other in the practice of court intrigues, yet neither the one nor the other was capable of performing any other services to the state either in peace or in war.

The immediate and necessary consequence of the alliance between Russia and Prussia was the maintenance of the old

constitution, the pernicious nature of which may readily be inferred from a few of its leading features.\* There was first of all no tribunal in Poland which could enforce its decisions against all persons, or treat all men as equal before the law. The whole course of legislation might be effectually impeded by a single voice, which right was denominated the *liberum veto*. No systematic arrangement of the finances was possible; and therefore, as well as for other reasons, the standing army could not be brought into a condition corresponding to the demands of the time. The whole trade of the community was carried on by Jews, whilst the mass of the population was poor and miserable, neither obedient to the king nor the law, but rendering a slavish service to some licentious and corrupt magnate, or to some contemptible and rude nobleman. The nobles consisted of some hundred thousand families, who were in part miserably poor, in part dependent on a few grandees; the latter, with the word freedom incessantly on their lips, boasting of freedom, were haughty and imperious, and unworthy of exercising the legislative functions which they enjoyed. Supported by foreign aid and foreign money, they were ready at any instant to draw their swords and enter into the most desperate and bloody feuds for the possession of the highest places of honour and distinction in the kingdom. These grandees possessed lordships and principalities, had millions of revenue, and thousands of other nobles in their service under the most various titles and pretences; were suffered to maintain troops; and, in consequence, were for the most part deeply involved in debt;—men, opinions, right and justice, all were openly venal.

On the king's death a republican administration of the

\* The threatening representations of Prussia and Russia prevented the estates from venturing to alter even those glaring defects concerning which all parties were agreed. As if the inevitable anarchy resulting from the *liberum veto* was not enough, the army was completely under the control of the commander-in-chief, the administration of justice under that of the high chancellor, the administration of the public moneys under that of the grand treasurer, and the whole regulation of the police in the hands of the grand marshal; and none of these functionaries could be called to any account by the king, or receive any orders from the head of the state. What remained to the king as his prerogative?

kingdom continued from October, 1763, till September, 1764; and this, as may be supposed, led to a complete dissolution of all the bonds of order and law. The son of the late king, who might have been brought forward in opposition to the Russian favourite Stanislaus Poniatowski, died soon after his father, so that Stanislaus was the only person who had any views to the throne; but he had determined and vigorous opponents in the Radzivils and others, who at length ventured to have recourse to arms against the Russians who were in the country. In March, 1764, the Radzivils, and Branicki the commander-in-chief, drove the Russian general Chmutof and his troops out of Graudenz. This furnished the Russians with an opportunity and pretence for intermeddling in the dispute, which, according to Polish custom, could only be decided by force of arms, because it was usual in Poland, in all cases of political contest, to form bodies named confederations, whose chiefs wielded military power, and in which the *liberum veto* was not held good, but everything was determined by majority of votes. These chiefs made good their cause by the power of the sword, so that whoever was vanquished in the field was adjudged to be in the wrong. The only means, therefore, of restoring peace to the whole kingdom was to form a general confederation, whose chief should exercise a species of military dictatorship, and be able to root out all other confederations.

The two Czartorinskis adopted this course in order to promote the cause of their relation Stanislaus. Supported by the Russians, they first defeated Radzivil and his confederates in July, then Branicki and the army of the crown, and finally compelled them to take refuge in the Turkish dominions. This was no sooner effected than Stanislaus Poniatowski was elected king in September, 1764, under the protection of the Russians and of the Czartorinskis, who were at the head of the general confederation. The main instruments, however, in the affair were Russian troops and Russian money.

Some time previous to this election, Catharine left Petersburg to make a tour in Livonia and Courland. On her way she visited Cronstadt; and thinking to give the foreign



ministers an advantageous idea of her marine, she invited them to follow her to that port. They did so: but the opinion they formed of her naval forces fell far short of that which she entertained of them herself. There was but a small number of ships, which they judged but little adapted to keep the sea; and the English ambassador frankly told her majesty that her navy was far from appearing to him to be very formidable. During her absence on this expedition, an insurrection broke out in the prison of the dethroned Ivan, under the conduct of a certain Mirovitch, which cost that unfortunate prince his life.

Ivan Antonovitch, styled Ivan the Third\* in the manifestoes that were published in his name while emperor, was born in 1740. He was great grandson of czar Ivan Alexeivitch, the elder half-brother of Peter the Great. We have seen him seized and confined with his parents and relations; at first in the citadel of Riga, then in the fortress of Dunamund; and thence removed to Oranienburg, at the south-eastern extremity of European Russia. About the end of 1745, or the beginning of 1746, the family was separated; all the rest being brought more northward to Kolmogory, Ivan was left behind in Oranienburg. To his great misfortune it came into the mind of a monk to carry him off; in their flight they had reached Smolensk, where the affair was discovered, and they were detained. From this place the wretched captive, lately the envied emperor of a quarter of the globe, was brought, for greater security, to Shlusselburg, and there lodged in a casemate of the fortress, the very loophole of which was immediately bricked up. He was never brought out into the open air, and no ray of heaven ever visited his eyes. In this subterranean vault it was necessary to keep a lamp always burning; and as no clock was either to be seen or heard, Ivan knew no difference between day and night. His interior guard, a captain and a lieutenant, were shut up with him; and there was a time when they did not dare to speak to him, or so much as to answer him the simplest question. What wonder if his ignorance should at length border on idiocy? This dreadful abode was, how-

\* Ivan III., if we reckon by the line of the czars, or VI., if from the first sovereign of Russia.



ever, afterwards changed for that presently to be described, in the corridor under the covered way, in the castle. Elizabeth caused him once to be brought in a covered cart to Petersburg, and saw and conversed with him. Peter III. also visited him incognito. Catharine, too, had a conversation with him soon after the commencement of her reign, as she relates in her manifesto of the 28th of August, 1764, in order, as is there said, to form a judgment of his understanding and talents. To her great surprise she found him to the last degree deficient in both. She observed in him a total privation of sense and reason, with a defect in his utterance, that even had he anything rational to utter, would have rendered him entirely unintelligible.

All persons, however, were not so thoroughly convinced of the incapacity of this prince. He was now arrived at the age of twenty-four years, and he might evidently be made an instrument, or at least a pretence, for exciting dangerous commotions. His just title to the crown, of which he had been formerly in possession, his long sufferings, without any other guilt than that possession and that title, his youth, and even the obscurity which attended his life, and which, therefore, gave latitude for conjecture and invention, formed very proper materials for working on the minds of the populace. At the moment when Catharine was taking her departure from the residence, she had intelligence of fresh conspiracies among the guards. Several of them were taken up: but experience having shown that the detection of one conspiracy always encouraged the hatching of some other; and, in order to avoid irritating the multitude by the frequency of punishments, the conspirators were proceeded against in private, and many of them were suffered to perish of hunger in prison.

Faithful to the system of calumny that had been of such service for the destruction of Peter III., the court of Russia incessantly employed it against Ivan. One while it was given out that he was an idiot, and incapable of uttering articulate sounds; at another, that he was a drunkard, and as ferocious as a savage. Sometimes it was even pretended that he was subject to fits of madness, and believed himself a prophet. But many there were to whom these reports seemed no better than tales invented by the blackest malignity, and afterwards innocently propagated by persons who

did not reflect on the numberless interests that might concur in their invention. Doubtless Ivan, to whom all kinds of instruction were refused,\* and who was kept shut up in a loathsome prison, denied the converse of any human being from whom he could derive information, must necessarily have been of a very confined understanding; but there is still a great distance between ignorance and imbecility or madness. As evidence that Ivan was neither mad nor idiotic, much stress has been laid upon the manner in which he behaved in an interview with Peter III., as related by baron Korf, in what seems to us a very apocryphal strain; and also on the conversation in 1756 he had at count Shuvalof's with the empress Elizabeth. Not only the graces of his person and the accents of his voice, but the moving complaints he uttered, are said to have awakened the sensibility of all present, and even to have drawn from the sentimental empress abundance of maudlin tears. But whatever might be the character of Ivan, the daring attempts that were repeatedly made in his favour rendered him formidable to Catharine and to the tranquillity of the empire.

Chance soon furnished an instrument to put him out of the way of being any disturbance to either. The regiment of Smolensk was in garrison in the town of Shlusselburg; and a company of about 100 men guarded the fortress in which prince Ivan was confined. In this regiment, as second lieutenant, was an officer named Vassili Mirovitch, whose grandfather had been implicated in the rebellion of the Mazeppa, and had fought under Charles XII. against Peter the Great. The estates of the family of Mirovitch had accordingly been forfeited to the crown. This young man earnestly pressed his suit to have them restored, but without success. Here there was motive enough to urge an angry and ambitious man upon a daring attempt to retrieve his fortunes. Nevertheless, some super-subtle writers, disdaining so plain and simple an explanation of Mirovitch's subsequent conduct, choose to see in his abortive attempt to liberate Ivan a deliberate contrivance of Catharine's Machiavellian policy. Though the family estates, they say, were

\* It however has been affirmed that a German officer, who for some time had the custody of him, clandestinely taught him to read.

not given back, yet the applicant was continually flattered with the hopes of their recovery, *if he would show himself active in securing the tranquillity of the empire.*

The inner guard placed over the imperial prisoner consisted of two officers, captain Vlassief and lieutenant Tschekin, who slept with him in his cell. These had a discretionary order, signed by the empress, by which they were enjoined to put the unhappy prince to death, on any insurrection that might be made in his favour, on the presumption that it could not otherwise be quelled.

The door of Ivan's prison opened under a sort of low arcade, which, together with it, formed the thickness of the castle-wall within the ramparts. In this arcade or corridor eight soldiers usually kept guard. The other soldiers were in the guard-house, at the gate of the castle, and at their proper stations. The detachment had for its commander an officer, who himself was under the orders of the governor.

It has been affirmed, that some time before the execution of his project, Mirovitch had made overtures to a lieutenant of the regiment of Veliki Luki, named Uschakof; and that Uschakof bound himself by an oath which he took at the altar of the church of St. Mary of Kasan in St. Petersburg, to aid him in the enterprise to the best of his power. But as this latter was drowned a few days after this is said to have happened, it is impossible to ascertain the fact. It is more apparent that Mirovitch talked in vague terms of the conspiracy with one of the valets of the court, and that he mentioned it afterwards to Simeon Tchevaridef, lieutenant of artillery, and spoke of the advantages that would accrue from the rescue of Ivan, and the delivering of him to the regiments of the guards. He, however, said nothing to Tchevaridef positively either of the time or the manner of executing his plot.

He had already performed his week's duty in the fortress without venturing an attempt. But, tormented by the anxieties arising from suspense, and condemning his own irresolution, he asked permission to be continued on guard for one week longer. This extraordinary step seems not to have excited any suspicions in a governor who was entrusted with so very important and critical a charge; and the request of Mirovitch was granted him without hesitation.

After having admitted into his confidence a man of the name of Jacob Pishkof, he began at about ten o'clock on a fine summer's night (July  $\frac{4}{15}$ ) to fall into conversation with three corporals and two common soldiers; and after tampering with them some time, and obviating such difficulties as were suggested by their fears, he gained them over to his plan, and they promised to follow his orders. Between the hours of one and two in the morning they came together again. Mirovitch and the corporals then made about fifty of the soldiers who were on guard to put themselves under arms, and marched them towards Ivan's prison. On the way they met Berednikof, the governor of the fortress, whom they thought fast locked in sleep; but who, roused by some noise, whether made by themselves or otherwise, had come out to see what was the matter. The governor authoritatively demanded of Mirovitch the reason of his appearance in arms at the head of the soldiers? Without returning any answer, Mirovitch knocked him down with the butt-end of his fire-lock, and ordering some of his people to secure him, continued his march.

Having arrived at the corridor into which the door of Ivan's chamber opened, he advanced against the handful of soldiers who guarded the prince. They received him with spirit, and quickly repulsed him. He immediately ordered his men to fire upon them, which they did. The sentinels returned the fire; and the conspirators retreated, though neither on one side nor the other was there a single man killed, or even wounded.

Mirovitch tried to rally his men; but they insisted on his showing them the order which he said he had received from Petersburg. He directly drew from his pocket and read to them a forged decree of the senate, recalling prince Ivan to the throne, and excluding Catharine from it, because she was gone into Livonia to marry count Poniatowski. The ignorant and credulous soldiers implicitly gave credit to the decree, and again put themselves in order to obey him. A piece of artillery was now brought from the ramparts to Mirovitch, who himself pointed it at the door of the dungeon, and was preparing to batter the place; but at that instant the door opened, and he entered, unmolested, with all his suite.



The officers Vlassief and Tschekin, commanders of the guard which was set on the prince, on hearing Mirovitch give orders to beat in the door, consulted together, and the result was that they came to the dreadful resolution of assassinating the unfortunate captive, undismayed by the vengeance of a desperate force, which (to give any colour to their proceeding) they must have concluded irresistible. They then opened the door, and showed Mirovitch the bleeding body of the murdered prince, and the order by which they were authorised to put him to death, if any attempt should be made to convey him away.

Mirovitch, struck with horror, at first started back some paces; then threw himself on the body of Ivan, and cried out: "I have missed my aim; I have now nothing to do but to die." Presently he rose up, returned to the place where he had left the governor in the hands of his soldiers; and surrendering his sword to him, coldly said: "It is I who am now your prisoner."

The next day the body of the unfortunate Ivan was exposed before the church in the castle of Shlusselburg, clothed in the habit of a sailor. As soon as it was known, immense crowds of people flocked thither from the neighbouring towns and from St. Petersburg; and it is impossible to describe the grief and indignation that were excited by the spectacle. The concourse and the murmurs increased to such a degree that a tumult was apprehended. Ivan's body was therefore wrapped up in a sheep-skin, put into a coffin, and buried without ceremony.\*

The governor of Shlusselburg despatched to Petersburg a full relation of the horrid outrage of Mirovitch, and of the tragical end of Ivan. He accompanied the account with a manifesto that had been found in the pocket of Mirovitch, and which, it was said, had been long fabricated in concert with lieutenant Ushakof. This manifesto, which contained many scurrilous invectives against Catharine, and represented prince Ivan as the sole legitimate emperor, it was observed,

\* Ivan's father survived in captivity until 1776; his mother had died thirty years before. Anthony Ulric left behind him two sons and two daughters by his wife, and several natural children, all except the eldest of the princesses born in prison. It was not until 1780 that Catharine released the survivors of this unhappy family.



was to have been published at the moment the prince was set at liberty and was making his entry into St. Petersburg. Panin immediately sent off a courier to the empress with an exact account of these particulars.

Her majesty was then at Riga; and, under a visible impatience of mind, was frequently inquiring after news from the capital: a circumstance by no means unaccountable, if we consider the frequent causes of alarm from plots and cabals with which she had been incessantly harassed since the beginning of her reign. Her inquietude increased from day to day, and she would often rise in the night to ask whether no courier had arrived.\* Some persons afterwards recollected these circumstances to her disadvantage, as if she was anxiously counting the days since the period when Mirovitch was stationed on guard.† At length, after three days had elapsed, the despatches of Panin were brought to hand.

The trial of the conspirators was remitted to the senate; they condemned Mirovitch to death; and he was publicly executed in pursuance of his sentence. The inferior actors in this design did not suffer death, but were subjected to other punishments perhaps not less severe. Pishkof had to run the gauntlet twelve times through a line of a thousand men. Three corporals and two fusiliers were flogged ten times along the same line; after which they were put to the public works with a log chained to their legs. The other soldiers who acted under the orders of Mirovitch were likewise flogged; and after being incorporated in other regiments, were sent into distant garrisons. The officers who put the prince to death were amply rewarded for their fidelity. A manifesto appeared by authority, giving an account of the whole affair. It was filled with expressions of humanity and piety, which sort of language seemed now to be the official style of the court of Petersburg.

The public was much divided in opinion concerning the

\* These facts have often been confirmed by general Brown, who honestly attributed these perturbations of Catharine to supernatural presentiments.

† The circumstance that Mirovitch had suffered his week's duty on guard to expire before he could summon up courage enough to attempt the execution of his project, was not, on this occasion, forgotten.

whole of this transaction. It was thought inconceivable that an insignificant private individual should hazard an enterprise, that, if even at first all things should go well, yet could never be prosecuted to final success by him.\* That in the attack no one should be hurt; that upon Ivan's death all should be immediately as quiet as if nothing had happened; that no inquiry was set on foot about any accomplices in Petersburg, of which there had been some talk at first; seemed to give room to surmise that simply this death was the object in view, and to this sole end the whole machinery was directed. None of the court party could have done this service to the absent empress, without her knowledge and consent. But, on the other hand, the slanderous manifesto found upon Mirovitch, and above all the execution of the rebel, were urged by those who espoused the opposite side of the question.

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## CHAPTER XL.

### AFFAIRS OF POLAND, 1764-8—CESSION OF THE DUCHY OF HOLSTEIN-GOTTORP AND SCHLESWIG.

THE two Czartorinskis at the head of the general confederation of Poland, which conferred upon them a military dictatorship, would have succeeded in putting a stop to the prevailing anarchy and in organising a government for the king, had Repnin, who at that time ruled alone in Warsaw, suffered the general confederation or military union to be employed for the protection of the laws and the constitution. Repnin did not directly intermeddle with the affairs of the confederation, but, supported by Prussia, he made demands which of themselves would necessarily lead to its dissolution, however earnestly the Czartorinskis might have desired

\* This argument can have no weight now, when it is remembered how nearly general Mallet succeeded in a much more desperate conspiracy against Napoleon, with only a priest and a corporal for his accomplices.

to keep it together even after the dissolution of the diet at the close of the year 1764.

Repnin made three demands of the new government, or more properly speaking, of the Czartorinskis; these were drawn up with such malicious ingenuity, that whether they were granted or refused they would certainly give rise to vehement disputes between the king and either the Russians or the Poles; would involve the latter in disagreements with one another, and make the mutual hatred of political parties irreconcilable, by kindling the passions of religious fanaticism. Repnin first promised the Czartorinskis the sanction and support of Russia for the organisation of a regular Polish army of 50,000, the cost of whose maintenance was to be raised from the kingdom at large; to this promise, however, he annexed the condition, that Poland should conclude an offensive and defensive alliance with Russia. The views of Russia and the disadvantages which would result to Poland from such a treaty were so obvious, that the Czartorinskis could not possibly accede to it; they were, however, ultimately obliged to accept a defensive alliance. The second demand was unconditionally enforced. A map was presented, on which the boundaries were marked which Russia, at the expense of Poland, insisted upon, with a view to round off the territories of the empire; and the Poles were compelled to cede all those districts which the Russians under this pretence appropriated to themselves. The third demand related to those who were dissidents in religion, that is to say, who did not profess the Catholic faith; the demand was obviously made with one view both by Russia and Prussia, a view which no one at that time suspected, but which soon afterwards was clear enough to all. Those writers who were unfavourable to ancient and servile usages rejoiced on this occasion at the intervention of the powers; public opinion was loudly declared in favour of the oppressors and against the oppressed, because the latter were fanatics, raged against their opponents and in favour of their faith, and absolutely renounced that toleration on which Catharine and Frederick insisted.

The question of toleration, however, would never have brought the Cossacks into Poland, if the Russians had not been desirous of checking the majority of the Poles by supporting the cause of the minority, which had been most

brutally oppressed by the Jesuits and Papists. In the sixteenth century, all those nobles who professed the Protestant faith, or belonged to the party of the Socinians (*fratres Poloni*), or to the Greek Church, enjoyed the same rights and privileges as their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, and were eligible to all public offices of trust and authority. In the course of the seventeenth century, the Jesuits and the influence of the papal nuncio had succeeded in effecting their total or partial exclusion; the consequence was, that at the peace of Oliva (1660), England, Brandenburg, and Denmark guaranteed the possession and exercise of their civil rights to the dissident Poles, in order to protect the minority from further violence and oppression on the part of the majority. The Jesuits, ever fertile in cunning and casuistry, were clever enough to have the following equivocal words introduced into the treaty: "They shall continue to enjoy all the rights and privileges which they possessed previous to the Swedish war." This furnished the French with an opportunity of interfering, and of working out the state of oppression which ensued from the year 1620 till 1654, as the condition which existed before the war.

The Jesuits succeeded, in 1736, in obtaining a formal decree, whereby dissidents of whatever kind were excluded from all offices of state. In order to guard against the interference of any of those powers who had become guarantees to the peace of Oliva, they passed a decree at the same time, that any appeal to any foreign power whatsoever, with respect to the internal affairs of the kingdom, should be punished as high treason. From this time forward internal disquiets never ceased; but in the year 1764 the dissidents for the first time seriously renewed their protestations against this injustice, and, without any solicitation on their own part, they were supported not only by Russia and Prussia, but also by Denmark. The chancellor and his nephew attempted to bring their fanatical fellow-countrymen to reason, and to induce them so to act as to deprive the Russians and Prussians of all pretence of interfering. The Polish diet, however, was quite inaccessible to the counsels of reason or experience; every question among them was settled by the sword. The Czartorinskis submitted a proposition in favour of the dissidents to the diet, which was to be closed on the



10th of December, 1764, but the proposal gave rise to a dreadful uproar in the assembly. The secretary was cried down, and prevented from reading the paper; the deputies even threatened him with their drawn swords. The consequence was, that a violent and tumultuary resolution was passed, which was precisely of such a character as was best suited for the promotion of the Russian and Prussian policy. The oppressive constitutions of 1717 and 1736 were not only renewed, but the tribunals were enjoined to put the law vigorously in execution against all offenders.

This laid the foundation for the interference of the foreign powers, if, as was to be presumed, the diet which was to be held in the year 1766 should adhere to and maintain the resolution which had been passed in 1764. The dissidents, who had been secretly encouraged in their course, appealed in the mean time to the powers which had guaranteed the exercise of their rights, made further representations respecting their condition, and the Russians assembled a new army on the frontiers. Stanislaus continued to sink deeper and deeper; Catharine, therefore, sent Saldern, who was admirably suited to co-operate with Repnin, and was acquainted with all the legal refinements and quirks of which the latter was ignorant, in order to assist Repnin with his knowledge and experience in Warsaw, before he proceeded to Copenhagen. The two together extorted by threats a promise from the government that they would acquiesce in the demands of the other powers on the next assembling of the diet. It was, however, easy to foresee that the government was in no condition to fulfil this promise; for the opponents of the Czartorinskis, and especially the two chiefs of the confederation which was formed to oppose the election of Stanislaus, were by no means reconciled to the king. Radzivil had proceeded from Turkey to Dresden, and there met with a very favourable reception; Branicki had returned to his estates in Bialystock without even having paid his respects at the court.

In compliance with Saldern's advice, the Russians, by a military demonstration, overawed the diet which was summoned for September, 1766, even before it met, and promoted the great cause of toleration, as it was called in the whole of Europe, by the bayonets of 20,000 Russians, who were marched into Poland. The other powers were still dissatisfied



with the manner in which Stanislaus' election had been effected, and had no ambassadors in Warsaw; king Frederick allowed Repnin, aided by his own ambassador, to carry out the whole plan, to which he was fully equal, and with great caution and prudence left the use of military force, as well as all the bullying work, to the Russians alone.

By Repnin's orders, some of the colonels belonging to the Russian regiments which were then lying in Poland travelled over the whole country, waited on the bishops, and threatened not only to plunder and lay waste their estates, but even to carry themselves out of the country if, in the approaching diet, they dared to make any complaints of the stay of the Russians in Poland, or the unjustifiable manner in which portions of territory had been wrested from their kingdom under pretence of giving uniformity to the frontiers of Russia, or to oppose the case of the dissidents. The king conducted himself miserably, and the French, whose king at that time pursued a secret policy which was opposed to the policy of his ministers, and had established a system of espionage and bribery which was different and sometimes opposed to theirs, paid an opposition in Poland, consisting of persons who were in reality no better than the Russian party. Soltyk, bishop of Cracow, was a man who had grown grey in intrigues, and now supported by French money, he issued a pastoral letter full of fanaticism, which was precisely such as might have been desired by the Russians and Prussians, who on this occasion, as the champions of philosophy of the eighteenth century, employed the dumb eloquence of the bayonet to promote its cause.

The diet was no sooner opened on the 1st of September, 1766, than at length the Russian and Prussian ambassadors came forward officially and publicly, and first demanded the abolition of everything which had been done by the Czartorinskis. The latter, by certain changes in the existing constitution, had introduced some order into the government and administration of this unfortunate kingdom, and were desirous of rendering it possible to adopt resolutions calculated to facilitate the introduction of laws and the progress of administration, which should be passed by a majority of votes, and could not be prevented by the exercise of the *liberum veto*. The dissolution of the general confederation was there-

fore the chief demand of the powers, and this was incidentally accompanied with the security of their rights and privileges to the dissidents. In order to make head against the powers, and to resist their threatening demands, the Poles who were in collusion with France, and especially Soltyk, used all the means in their power to rouse and stimulate the fanaticism of their countrymen, and with this view had recourse to the assistance of the pope, whose nuncio again played an important part in the diet. The circumstance of the pope's interference compelled the English and Danish ambassadors, although against their inclination, to join with Russia and Prussia at least on one point. The nuncio made a speech to the diet, full of all those well-known phrases of ecclesiastical unction which have descended from the middle ages and were employed by the curia in public affairs; and therein he formally protested against the concession of those rights and privileges to the heretics which had been guaranteed to them by the powers at the peace of Oliva.

Rome unfortunately gained her object and sealed the doom of Poland; Soltyk's party proved victorious. The diet, which terminated on the 24th of December, 1766, refused, like its predecessor, all concessions to the dissidents. Although the majority of the Poles were opposed to the foreign powers on this point, they heartily agreed with them respecting the maintenance of anarchy in the kingdom. In spite of the power and influence of the Czartorinskis, the diet restored everything which they had abolished with a view to put a check to anarchy, at least in some points. The general confederation was dissolved, and what were called the rights of the nation, but which in reality were scandalous abuses, were re-established. The Czartorinskis only succeeded with great difficulty in persuading the diet not to re-establish the four great dignities of the kingdom which had been abolished, and to retain the four newly instituted colleges, by virtue of which the king was to obtain a nearer connexion with, and a greater influence over, the affairs of the state than had been enjoyed by his predecessors. An essential improvement was introduced with respect to the most unjust and mischievous principle of the *liberum veto*. Complete unanimity was still held necessary in the resolutions of the general assembly; but it was agreed that in future a majority of voices should be decisive in all the provincial assemblies.

In the following year Russia and Prussia opposed the resolutions of the diet, not in their own names, but as allies of the numerous confederation of Poles who had been won over to their cause, and as guarantees for the demands of the dissidents. The latter, with a view of being able to claim the right of maintaining their cause by force of arms, had also recourse to confederations, although, properly speaking, this name was only conceded to the associations of the nobles, but few of whom belonged to the party of the dissidents. Two confederations of dissidents were formed by March, 1767, one of which was under Russian protection and had its head-quarters at Gluck in Lithuania, and the other under Prussian, at Thorn in Polish Prussia. The former entered into a union with the duke of Courland, and by a special act of accession the latter was joined by the cities of Thorn, Elbing, and Dantzic. The number of Catholics who united in confederations against the resolutions of the diet, at the same time as the dissidents, is a convincing proof that Poland continued to be in a condition in which rights were only maintained or pretensions justified by the law of the strongest. In the beginning of the year 1767, twenty-four such confederations were formed for the maintenance of this law, and in May their number had increased to one hundred and seventy-eight; the declared object of them all was the same—by the aid of the Russians and Prussians to abolish all those institutions which the Czartorinskis had introduced in order to give the government some influence and power.

In the mean time, the Russians had continued to pour new troops into the country, and made a public declaration that they would treat all who opposed them as enemies; but they had need of a Catholic to act in favour of their confederations of dissidents, one around whom his fellow-believers might rally, and who should be also of such distinguished rank as to form a counterpoise to the dignity of the king and the exalted position of the Czartorinskis. Branicki wished to remain quiet; recourse was therefore had to Radzivil, who had been judicially condemned in Poland, but whose restoration was eagerly desired by his Lithuanians. He was at that time still residing in Dresden; the Russians caused a hint to be given him, which he the more readily took, as he longed to revenge himself upon the government party, who, according

to the terms of the sentence pronounced upon him, had laid waste his estates and destroyed his castles. He immediately proceeded to Dantzic, and thence under a guard of Cossacks to Wilna. The universal confusion in Poland now furnished the Russians and Prussians with the desired pretence for entering anew, on the 23rd of April, 1767, into a secret treaty, concluded apparently with a view to secure the rights and maintain the cause of the dissidents, but the secret articles of which had a very different object. Stanislaus was now completely forsaken in Warsaw, for everybody belonged to the one confederation or the other. In this way the times of ancient barbarism were brought back into Poland by the philosophical king of Prussia and by Catharine II., who devoted so much of her thoughts to legislation, and was so anxious about the education and training of her grandson, that she herself composed some affecting pieces for this purpose; and this barbarism was introduced because the savage Poles were not disposed to submit to be trained and made tolerant by the instrumentality of the sword. The Poles who were struggling for their freedom were moreover nothing better than their brethren who were sold to the Russians, as they showed by the revolting cruelties they committed in and after the bloody engagement which was fought between them and the dissidents in May at Kalisch.

Radzivil having placed himself at the head of the Lithuanian confederacy, the aged Branicki soon afterwards gave in his adhesion, and on the 23rd of June a general assembly was held at Radom, in order to form a general confederation, by which, according to the law of the Polish constitution, which properly speaking was no constitution, the king and every species of government were in some measure suspended.\*

\* According to the usages of the extraordinary constitution of Poland, when a general confederation was formed to which the king did not accede, his power was absolutely null as long as the confederation was in existence; the chief of the confederation was a dictator. Such an association was no sooner established than all the authorities and courts of law ceased to exercise their functions, and the whole republic was subject to the confederated nobility. The king, the high officers of state and of the law, became responsible to them, and whoever failed to take part in such a general confederation, forfeited his estates and all the privileges which he enjoyed as a nobleman.



The Catholics who joined the confederation of Radom were shamefully deceived; for being shut up and threatened by Russian troops, they were compelled to take part in a general confederation in favour of the dissidents, with whom they had not the slightest desire to make common cause. Branicki therefore no sooner became aware of the views entertained by the Russians, than he gave up his journey to Warsaw, and sought to withdraw from these suspicious transactions; Radzivil, on the contrary, suffered himself to be made the tool of the Russians, was placed at the head of the general confederation, and as a reward for his compliance received in October the order of St. Andrew, which he was not ashamed to wear in presence of his countrymen. When the place of meeting of the general confederation was removed from Radom to Warsaw, Radzivil too perceived that he as well as the king was betrayed, and that both were in fact in some measure prisoners in the hands of the Russians; he was nevertheless compelled, contrary to his wish, to cause the union of the dissidents with his general confederation to be proclaimed in Warsaw on the 15th of September. For this service it was that he received the Russian decoration on the 1st of October, on the 5th of which month the diet was to be opened. Radzivil, however, tried to put off this decisive sitting till the 12th, in hopes that in the mean time they should find means to terrify Soltyk and his fanatical and clamorous adherents. Repnin, however, declared peremptorily, that every one who did not unconditionally acquiesce in the demands which he preferred through Radzivil, should be carried off by his Russians, even from the midst of Warsaw itself, and transported to Siberia. Such was the despotic manner in which he governed in Warsaw. On the other hand, the papal nuncio again appeared on the stage, aided and supported by Soltyk, who, like many people of his stamp in our own days, wished for the honours of martyrdom, however little in other respects he had anything of a martyr in him.

The whole party to which Soltyk belonged, in the most vehement, and, under existing circumstances, in the most incautious manner, rejected the proposal which was made on the 12th to comply with the demands of the Russians, by whose troops the assembly was surrounded; and it was only



with great difficulty that the assembly agreed to allow the question to be again brought forward and discussed on the 16th. In the mean time, Repnin was to proceed to deal with the most obstinate among the leaders of the opposite party after his own fashion, and in such a way as to strike terror into the remainder. John Andrew Zaluski, the learned bishop of Kief, was among the leaders of the fanatical and anti-Russian patriotic party, which had combined to raise a determined and violent opposition to the measures proposed on the 12th. Zaluski was referendary of the kingdom, and has entitled himself to immortal honour from his country on account of his learned historical investigations, but still more by having applied his great wealth for the collection of a library of 200,000 volumes, including 20,000 in the Polish language, which was opened for the use of the public in Warsaw in 1747, and finally destroyed by Suvarof's Cossacks in 1795. This celebrated man had now for twenty years applied all the vast acquirements of his learning, and all the influence of his patriotism, to the support of the Jesuitical party, and in opposition to the demands and spirit of the age; all argument and reasoning with such a man was useless and vain; and so thought Repnin. Zaluski was a sincere and honest fanatic, and besides him in this case, Krasinski, bishop of Kaminiac, Soltyk, bishop of Cracow, who was supported by the French, and the two Rzewuskys, the one waiwode of Cracow, and the other starost of Dolina, may be regarded as the heads and leaders of the anti-Russian party. Repnin, without any feeling of respect or shame, caused these men, with the exception of Krasinski, who escaped, to be seized in the residence of their king, and before the eyes of the whole body of the nobility, so proud of their freedom, to be carried off out of their country, and detained as prisoners in East Russia. There is, however, something still more remarkable in reference to the principles which hold good in Russia, and on which Repnin acted in Poland, than even this act of brutal violence upon free men; and that is, a letter which Repnin wrote to the general confederation, in which he expounds what, according to him, was the true rule by which their conduct should be regulated. We give this curious document in his own words.\*

\* The declaration of prince Repnin, delivered to the confederated

From this moment Repnin ruled openly in Warsaw: he and his Russians sold or made presents of all public offices and livings in Poland, whilst Stanislaus Augustus amused himself with the mere tinsel of his kingly office, which contributed to make him still more contemptible than before. At the very time in which the most important interests of the nation were at stake, he sought honour and delight in the practice and observance of the most miserable courtly acts and ceremonies. The Russians formed a perfectly correct judgment of the king and his uncle; their behaviour was mean and contemptible in the fourth solemn meeting of the diet, held on the 16th of October, in which the case of the dissidents was to be finally decided; Radzivil also played a most singular part. Notwithstanding the extensive means of terror which had been employed, and because he durst not venture to be openly favourable to Russia, he found himself unable to carry through any satisfactory measures in the stormy and raging assembly of the 16th, but on the 17th he found ways and means of success. The diet in the mean time appointed a committee, who were authorised with full powers to lay down the main principles of a law or laws favourable

estates, was as follows:—"Friends and allies of the confederated republic, the troops of her imperial majesty, my sovereign, have arrested the bishop of Cracow, the bishop of Kief, the starost of Dolina, &c., for having failed, by their conduct, in the respect that is due to the dignity of her imperial majesty; and having attacked the purity of her wise, disinterested, and amicable intentions in favour of the republic. The illustrious general confederation of the republic, of the crown, and of Lithuania, being under the protection of her imperial majesty, the undersigned notifies this to that assembly, with positive and solemn assurances of the continuance of her high protection, and of the assistance and support of her imperial majesty to the general confederation united for the preservation of the Polish laws and liberties, with redress of all the abuses that have crept into the government contrary to the fundamental laws of the empire. Her majesty is only desirous of the welfare of the republic, and will not discontinue to grant it her assistance towards the attainment of that desirable end (without any interest or pecuniary consideration), wishing for no other recompense than the safety, the happiness, and the liberty of the Polish nation; according to what has been already clearly expressed in the declarations of her imperial majesty, which guarantee to the republic its actual possessions, as well as its laws, its form of government, and the prerogatives of each individual. Done at Warsaw, the 14th of October, 1767.

(Signed) "NICHOLAS PRINCE REPNIN."

to the dissidents, which were afterwards to be laid before a *plenum* in a new sitting after an adjournment of some weeks, and to be by them fully confirmed.

This committee, which at first consisted of fourteen, was afterwards increased to sixteen members; it had not even the appearance of freedom in its discussions and decisions, for it was held alternately in the house of the primate and in that of the Russian ambassador. It was necessary for fourteen members to be present, among whom all resolutions were decided by a majority of votes. The committee was attended by seven deputies from the body of dissidents, and by the Prussian, English, and Danish ambassadors. Repnin, in the tone of a dictator, prescribed every resolution which the committee was to adopt; and these affected not only the case of the dissidents, but especially the re-establishment of all those abuses which in latter times had been abolished with a view to introduce and maintain order, at least in some departments of the government. The consultations of the committee furnished a melancholy spectacle, for the vehement and free-minded Poles were sometimes eager to express their opinions, which, however, Repnin would not allow. No one was at liberty even to quote the well-known and publicly expressed opinions of the empress of Russia as his own. If any attempted to do so, Repnin commanded silence, and said, "It is my office alone to explain the true sense of any declarations of the empress; here I suffer neither reasoning nor objections, but require absolute submission to her will." It will excite no surprise, that in this fashion, after the lapse of a month, the committee was prepared to lay before the general assembly a scheme which was based upon the most liberal dispositions towards the dissidents. This act of toleration, which was passed by the committee on the 19th of November, 1767, was greeted with loud rejoicings throughout the whole of Europe, and the theatrical scene which was exhibited at its signing was a presage of the dissolution of the kingdom of Poland and its incorporation with the Russian empire. The Russian troops were under arms and completely surrounded the meeting, which held its sittings in one of the large saloons of Repnin's house; there hung the portrait of the empress, and under that portrait the resolution of the committee was signed.

According to the terms of this special act, the diet was freely to grant all those privileges to the dissidents which were enjoyed by other Poles, and they were to be regarded as eligible to all public offices, with the exception of that of king, which was to be bestowed exclusively upon persons who were of the Roman Catholic faith.

The committee having brought their consultations respecting this special act in favour of the dissidents to a conclusion, proceeded to deliberate on those points which Russia and Prussia wished to establish in favour of anarchy and its continuing influence. By means of this plenipotentiary committee of the estates, the Polish constitution and administration were to be settled in the shortest way, in a manner most advantageous to the Russians; the resolutions adopted by the committee, at Repnin's dictation, were afterwards to be laid before a full assembly of the diet, and by it to be summarily accepted. The most scandalous thing for the nation, its king, Radzivil, and all those haughty magnates who dazzled the people by their splendour, was, that they allowed themselves to be enriched out of the poverty of the people, who were fleeced by the confederation and the Russians.\*

The wisest thing the Poles could do under the circumstances was to submit to the will of the Russians, and await the impending war with Turkey, in order again to

\* The proposal to compensate each of the three grand marshals of the two confederations for the expenses to which they had been put in order to maintain the dignity of their office, by a present of 100,000 florins, was, it is true, declined by these nobles in magnanimous speeches; but still worse than this happened: colonels Carr and Igelström, who had carried all Repnin's plans of injustice and violence into execution, and were the instruments of all the measures by which the diet was compelled to adopt the prescribed resolutions, received estates, and were incorporated into the Polish nobility without any inquiries being instituted as to their noble descent. A sum of 1,500,000 florins was voted to the king as a yearly income. Radzivil received the sum of 600,000 florins a year as a compensation for his losses and for the 3,000,000 which the republic was indebted to his family; the sum of 120,000 florins which the high treasurer had drawn was increased to 200,000 florins; and the high treasurer of Lithuania also received an addition to his income of 40,000. Count Fleming, the bishop of Vilda, and others, received proportionate sums; and the two princes of Saxony an appanage of 12,000 Polish ducats.



overthrow everything. Russia was in fact so certain of accomplishing her ends, that notwithstanding the numerous protestations which were made against what was going forward in Warsaw, and in contempt of the armed confederations which were on foot in all parts of the kingdom, she suffered a portion of her troops to be withdrawn, because the diet had agreed to all her demands. The sittings of that body were drawing to a close ; it had adopted all the proposals of the committee, recognised the rights of the dissidents, re-established the old constitution and all its abuses, and also, on the 28th of February, 1768, sanctioned the treaty by virtue of which Poland was for ever placed under the guardianship of Russia. This took place by means of what was called the friendly agreement with Russia, by virtue of which that power was recognised as the guarantee of the Polish constitution, and therefore justified in interfering with all the internal affairs of the kingdom, whilst neither the diets of the provinces nor those of the kingdom could come to any binding resolution without the sanction of Russia. This last determination roused the spirit of the patriots, and made an easy game for the fanatics who formed the confederation of Barr. Krasinski had first excited the most ardent among the Catholics to resist the extension of new rights to the dissidents ; and then Pulawski and Potocki united these malcontents into a new confederation opposed to the general confederation of the diet.

The government in Warsaw, wholly dependent as it was on Repnin, could calculate on the Russians alone for support. Even the Polish diet formally solicited their aid, at the end of March, to assist in putting down the confederates, who were designated as rebels. This step was taken in consequence of the latter having at length made themselves masters of the fortress of Barr, the town having been already long in their power. In compliance with this demand a new Russian army under Soltikof advanced into Poland. The Poles were always defeated in serious engagements, and the Russians avenged their guerilla warfare by devastation, burning, and murder.

It was about this time (in 1767) that Catharine signed, in the name of her son Paul, a treaty with Christian VII., which was ratified on the young grand-duke, heir to Hol-



stein-Gottorp, attaining his majority, 1st of July, 1773. By virtue of this act, against which Sweden vainly protested, Paul ceded to the royal family of Denmark all his rights to the duchy of Holstein-Gottorp and to Schleswig, in exchange for Oldenburg and Delmenhorst, which the emperor Joseph II. immediately erected into a duchy, and governed for the space of three days; at the expiration of this time Catharine's son gave the new duchy to his relative, Frederick Augustus, prince-bishop of Lübeck, head of the house of Holstein-Eutin, a younger branch of his own family.

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## CHAPTER XLI.

### WAR WITH TURKEY.

POTOCKI, generalissimo of the confederation of Barr, was unable to make head against his opponents; in May, 1768, he was vanquished in the field, and obliged to take refuge in the Turkish territory beyond the Dniestr. This occurred at the time in which the comte de Vergennes, one of the ablest of the French diplomatists, filled the post of minister in Constantinople, and by Choiseul's command he lost no opportunity of encouraging and urging the Turks to support the cause of the Poles.

The Turks had long observed with great jealousy that the Poles were more and more driven upon their territories, and that one place after another was seized and occupied by the pursuing Russians; and when at last, in June, 1768, the latter took possession of Biala and Sulatch, the Turks declared to the Prussian minister their determination to render assistance to the oppressed Poles and summon the Tatars to arms. The Russians now seeing that a war with Turkey was unavoidable, were eager to put an end to the Polish war before a new one should begin. They sent considerable reinforcements to their army in Poland, and issued orders for the reduction of Barr and Cracow, the two bulwarks of the confederation, at any cost, and without regard to the

loss of men. Barr was taken by storm at the end of July, 4000 Poles were cut down, and the treasures which had been brought from a distance into this place of security were plundered. Both Krasinski and Potocki had the good fortune to escape. They at first took refuge in Mohilef, but immediately afterwards found it advisable to seek the protection of the Turks in Khotchim. Many of the scattered Poles followed the example of their leaders and assembled in Moldavia, especially in that part of it which lay near the Polish frontiers, and was under the dominion of the khan of the Tatars. The small town of Balta was situated in this district, which on the one side touched on Bessarabia, and on the other was separated from the Ukraine only by a small brook. The destruction of this little town first gave occasion to the war with the Turks, and afterwards to the fall of the Tatar power.

The Tatar commander in Balta not only received the fugitive Poles into the town, but suffered them, after the Tatar fashion, to make predatory incursions into the Polish territory. Colonel Weissmann cut down these confederated Poles by hundreds wherever he could meet with them, followed them across the Turkish frontiers, conquered and plundered the small town of Balta, and laid it in ashes. The news of this daring violation having reached Constantinople on the 13-14th of July, 1768, the mufti at length granted the ecclesiastical sanction (*fetwah*) for the commencement of war, which had been long sought from him in vain; the grand vizier was removed from his office, and orders were issued to the Tatar khan. The miserable Turkish government, however, allowed six weeks to elapse before the war was actually begun; and the Russians availed themselves of the interval to reduce Cracow, where indeed they met with a more determined resistance than before Barr. The Poles now continued to carry on a war of devastation and murder with the Russians and with their countrymen who adhered to the government, so that this miserable country was wasted in all directions by fire and sword, and cruelties of the most shocking description were practised by the Russians, to whom the confederates were unable to offer any opposition in the field. At length the Turks appeared on the stage.

They had given the Russians time enough to prepare for

the war, for they delayed their declaration from July till October: they calculated particularly upon the services of the Nogai Tatars, whose khan, however, the Turks distrusted; he was therefore deposed, and Krimgerai, an able general whom the Russians both feared and hated, was named in his stead. Meanwhile hostilities had begun long before the actual declarations of war, and hordes of Tatars had carried away thousands of the colonists of New Servia before they were driven back into their steppes (in January, 1769) by the Russians under Isakof. In this year the Russians set on foot three armies; the one in Podolia under prince Alexander Gallitzin was to take Khotchim, and then occupy Moldavia: this general, however, was unequal to the task. The second, under Peter Romantzof, was to cover and protect the frontiers of Russia between the Dniepr and the Sea of Azof against the incursions of the Tatars, and to recover the fortresses of Azof and Taganrok, which had been surrendered by the treaty of Belgrade. The third, under general Weissmann, was destined to act against the Poles; and at the same time, in order to prevent other Poles who were now quiet from joining their countrymen in arms, Repnin was recalled from Warsaw, and Volkonsky, a man of milder character, was sent thither in his stead. The Turkish army advanced with great boasting, and accompanied by innumerable multitudes of people; but it was far more destructive to Moldavia and Vallachia than dangerous to the enemy. Gallitzin's failure, therefore, in his first attack upon Khotchim must be attributed, not to his opponents, but to his own incapacity; and in the beginning of May (1769) he was again obliged to retreat beyond the Dniestr.

The only able man among the Turks and Tatars was Krimgerai, the new khan; but he died suddenly, just as the Turkish army was advancing which he was to join. The grand vizier was no better a general than Gallitzin, but he knew his deficiency and the nature of his army, and therefore avoided the risks of a battle. In other respects, he left the whole direction of the army to Chalil Pasha, seraskier of Rumelia and Khotchim, and to Moldavandji Pasha, a man of foolhardy impetuosity. Gallitzin drew together large reinforcements in Podolia, and passed the Dniestr a second time in the same year, 1769. He closely blockaded Khotchim, and

many bloody skirmishes were fought in its neighbourhood. In these the Russians were almost always victorious, but the grand vizier succeeded in avoiding a regular battle. In consequence of this harassing warfare, Gallitzin, after having lost great numbers of his troops, notwithstanding his victories, was again obliged to retire beyond the Danube.

This campaign was equally inglorious and hurtful to the Turks and the Russians, and both the grand vizier and Gallitzin were removed from their respective commands; their fates, however, were very different. Gallitzin was created a field-marshal, because, a few days before his departure from the army, Weissmann, one of his subordinate generals, had achieved some splendid successes, after he himself had lost a whole year in marching to and fro, and sacrificed 20,000 men to no purpose; the grand vizier, on the other hand, because he had wisely spared his people, and gained greater advantages by his delays than he could have secured by a decisive engagement, was beheaded in Adrianople immediately after his deposition. Moldavandji Pasha succeeded him as grand vizier.

Romantzof appeared on the 27th of September to relieve Gallitzin of his command, but in the beginning of the month the fortune of war had already decided in favour of the Russians. The new vizier had most inconsiderately followed the Russians across the Dniestr, which brought him into contact with general Weissmann. This able commander allowed one division of the Turkish army after another to cross the river without molestation; but they had no sooner reached the further bank than he attacked and defeated them. Their bridge was afterwards carried away by the stream, and Weissmann having defeated the enemy in two pitched battles, destroyed 30,000 of them in a series of engagements, which were always favourable to the Russians. A still greater number, particularly of Asiatics, forsook their colours in autumn, according to the Turkish custom, and retired to their homes for the winter. The Russians pursued the fugitives on the farther side of the river, and were astonished beyond measure as they approached Khotchim to find that the whole garrison of this important fortress had been seized with a panic and fled, and that on the 20th of September they were suffered to march in and take possession without the slightest opposi-



tion. This occurred seven days before Gallitzin surrendered his command into the hands of Romantzof. Soon afterwards Chalil Pasha, who had been removed by the late vizier on account of his incapacity, was nominated instead of Moldavandji, who had only retained his exalted situation for four months.

Romantzof remained with the main body of the troops behind the Dniestr, and despatched separate divisions into Moldavia and Vallachia, to take possession of the capitals and fortresses of these provinces. Before the end of the year 1769 both Yassy and Bucharest were occupied, and the hospodar carried away captive. Colonel Fabrician, with 1500 men, stormed batteries defended by 10,000 to 15,000 Turks, and took the fortress of Gallatch on the Pruth. This feat was so astonishing, that the empress immediately rewarded the colonel with the new order of St. George, and added, that she and the colonel were as yet the only persons who had worn it. Braila was not destroyed till the commencement of the following year. Panin was less fortunate, for he had made an unsuccessful attempt to reduce Bender before he took up his winter quarters in the Ukraine.

In the following year (1770), Stoffeln had already finished a campaign before Romantzof commenced his in May. The grand vizier had made his appearance on the Danube in winter, and sent divisions of his army into Moldavia and Vallachia, but Stoffeln gained several victories over him in the field, whereupon the Turks retired. The Russians followed them, burnt down the towns of Giurgevo and Braila, but were unable to reduce the fortress of the latter, and returned to Bucharest on the 27th of February. Romantzof at length crossed the Dniestr in May, in order to march upon the Pruth, whilst Panin sent one division of his army against Bender, and a second against Otchakof. Whilst the grand vizier still delayed on the farther side of the Danube, Romantzof directed his forces, in the first instance, against the new Tatar khan, who had advanced to the Pruth at the head of a combined army of Turks and Tatars. At this time there were two generals of division in the Russian army who had studied military tactics in the seven years' war: Romantzof had conducted the siege of Colberg, and Repnin had served under the French on the Rhine; the third division was



commanded by the able general Bauer. He was the man who, without loss or almost trouble, took the khan's camp by storm on the 17th of July, on the banks of the Larga or Kumlas. The Turks and Tatars fled on this occasion with such precipitation, that scarcely a single man was taken prisoner; and Bauer, at the head of the grenadier company which formed the body-guard of the commander-in-chief, with flying colours entered the immense silken tent of the khan, which was covered with embroidery in silver and gold. The victors did not lose a hundred men, whilst they took all the enemy's baggage and sixty pieces of cannon, but only about thirty prisoners.

Whilst Romantzof was advancing along the Pruth to the Danube, the Turks and Tatars again united and furnished him with a new opportunity of astonishing all Europe by the boldness of his attack upon an army six times the number of his own, 20,000 Russians, whilst the khan with 80,000 men was in his rear, and might at any moment have surrounded and cut off his left wing. Immediately after the battle of Larga, intelligence was brought to the Russians that the grand vizier, whose army was stated by the Turks at 300,000 men, but which Falkenskiöld computes at 160,000, was encamped on the left bank of the Kahul. The 20,000 Russians advanced by forced marches against the Turkish camp, which was almost destitute of defences; general Bauer led the attack upon the left wing, Bruce and Repnin that on the right.

The battle of the Kahul resulted in the same way as the assault upon the Tatar army on the Larga; camp, baggage, and immense treasures became the booty of the Russians, together with 160 pieces of cannon and 7000 baggage wagons, but the prisoners did not amount to a hundred in all. The flight of the Turks was so hasty and precipitate, that it was alleged their loss did not amount to 500 men. The grand vizier rallied his troops on the farther side of the Danube, as the small Russian army was obliged to turn its attention to the fortresses and the occupation of the Tatar territory from the Pruth as far as the lines of Perekop, that is, to the isthmus of the Crimea. From the 6th of August one fortress fell after another, till the Russians were able to take up a safe position in the country of the Tatars on the shores of

the Black Sea. Repnin conquered Kilia-Nova, after having previously reduced Ismail at the end of a ten days' siege; Akerman fell after a very short defence; Bender, which is situated on the Dniepr, and in the very heart of the Tatar country, offered a more obstinate resistance; and when art failed, the Russians were obliged to purchase possession of the town at a tremendous expenditure of blood. Maddened by the losses which they had experienced in their rash attempts to take the town by a *coup de main*, they at length forced an entrance on the 27th of September, cut down thousands, and were obliged to take one street after another by storm, till the town lost two-thirds of its population in the slaughter and the conflagration, which continued for three days.\* The Tatars of Edissa and Budjiak renounced the sovereignty of the Turks on the 17th, and did homage to the Russians, who then pushed forward into the Crimea. A deputation from the Tatars between the Pruth and the Dniepr was received by the empress herself in Petersburg on the 3rd of March, 1771, when they did solemn homage, and submitted to the sovereignty of Russia. The success of the Russian arms was not so expeditious in the case of Braila as in that of Bender; the citadel of the former held out for two months longer, and a vain attempt to storm it cost the Russians a great loss in men; it was, however, obliged to capitulate at the end of November, 1770.

The circumstances connected with this war show us how deep the kingdom of Poland had sunk, and how utterly dependent it had become. On the command of the Russians, the government was obliged to declare war against the Turks under the pretence of their having violated the Polish territory; but no result of any kind followed the declaration. This campaign, which shed a glory and renown upon the empress and Romantzof only to be compared with

\* The Russians had recourse to all the arts of military science, and employed a French engineer who boasted loudly of his skill. He constructed a whole labyrinth of mines, one close upon another; this process he called *globe de compression*; the result, however, did not correspond to his expectations. In storming the streets all persons were cut down without distinction, so that the population, which had previously amounted to 32,000, after two months only reached 11,000, who were all made prisoners.

that of Bonaparte after his first campaign in Italy, heaped inexpressible calamities on the miserable inhabitants of the whole region from the Vistula to the Danube, and thence to the Crimea, and completely desolated the country. Romantsof took up his winter quarters in Yassy, and Olitch in Bucharest, whilst Weissmann commanded on the Danube, and sent single divisions of his army to Kilia, Akerman, Braila, and Ismail. The attack in the following year was chiefly directed against the Crimea, and the favourites of the empress received a commission at the same time for the re-establishment of a Grecian kingdom in the islands and in Greece Proper.

Three Russians—Romantsof, Dolgoruki, and one of the terrible brothers Orlof—received the respective names of Zadunofsky, Krimsky, and Tchesmensky, from the scenes of their exploits, and from this time forward the empress was denominated *the Great*; every one was astonished at the splendour of the deeds, but no one dared to call to mind the millions which were spent on the useless expedition to the Grecian Archipelago, or the calamities which were brought upon unfortunate Greece. We shall notice the victors and their conquests one after another, beginning with Dolgoruki.

In 1770 Panin had already pushed forward as far as Perekop, but afterwards retired, and took up his winter quarters in the Ukraine. Dolgoruki had no sooner replaced Panin in the command of this army, than he advanced his whole force against the Crimea. In the same manner as China was protected against the incursions of the Tatars by a wall, the Crimea was secured against the inroads of the Russians by fortified lines, which received their name from the city of Perekop, to which they also served as a defence. These lines consisted of a ditch seventy feet broad and forty-two feet deep, bordered and backed by a broad embankment of earth, which extended across the whole isthmus from sea to sea. The Tatars had already learned from experience how little such fortifications avail against the military arts of modern Europe, and the undeniable valour of a Russian army well commanded; Munich forced these lines in the year 1736, and Dolgoruki now confirmed that lesson, by performing the same exploit at the head of an army of 40,000 men, on the 26th of July. In less than a month from that

time the whole Crimea was in the power of the Russians, and as an introduction to future conquests they entered into an agreement with the Tatars. The latter held a large assembly in July, 1771, wherein a new khan was chosen, who was wholly dependent on the Russians, and owed his elevation to their influence, precisely as Stanislaus had been previously placed on the throne of Poland.

At the same time as Poland and Crim Tartary were made footstools of the empress's throne, a similar honour was designed for Greece. A magnificent naval expedition was prepared, under the command of Alexis Orlof, in order to excite and support a rebellion among the Greeks and the Slavonian subjects of the Turks, who professed the Greek religion. This expedition was really colossal, and fitted out with a degree of fantastic extravagance which was characteristic of the empress and the Orlofs, who never thought of anything but what was either horrible or magnificent. To fit out this useless expedition, a loan of thirty-five millions of livres was first expended, which had been raised by the marquis Maruzzi upon Corfu; and to this were afterwards added large loans, which had been raised for the express purpose in Holland, Leghorn, Genoa, and Lucca. Alexis had formed the plan of operations, and was nominated generalissimo of the armies as well as high-admiral of the whole Russian fleets in the Mediterranean Sea; and in order that the family of the Orlofs should have all the first places of honour, like imperial or royal princes, without rendering any actual service, his brother Feodor was appointed second in command. Neither of the brothers was at all fitted to lead an expedition, and the whole real direction of the fleet devolved upon admiral Spiridof, who alone of the Russians possessed the necessary knowledge and experience, which was in general supplied by the English naval officers, some of whom were to be found almost in every ship, but especially by admiral Elphinstone. Spiridof set sail in October, 1769, with ten ships of the line and four frigates, accompanied by a number of transports: he first touched at an English port, and next at Port Mahon in Minorca. Elphinstone followed with five ships of the line, two frigates, and a number of transports with troops on board. Alexis spent the carnival in Venice, but in the mean time he caused the Mainotes and all the inhabitants of the



Peloponnesus to be excited and stimulated by their own chiefs and by spies, who eluded observation by assuming the garb of priests.

The Russian fleet suffered severely by the winter storms, but still more from the inexperience of the Russian naval officers and pilots. The ships were dispersed, and driven about hither and thither; some of them, however, had reached the Archipelago in February, and the whole of the Morea was up in arms when Alexis arrived in April, 1770. Neither he nor his brother Feodor here added anything to their renown; for the Greeks, supported by a few battalions of Russians, who were landed for their aid, were in no condition to undertake anything important; but they practised inhuman cruelties upon the Turks, who afterwards revenged themselves by desolating and plundering, after their fashion, the country of their rebellious subjects. The Greeks were of no use except for mere predatory incursions or a guerilla warfare; the Russians were not numerous enough, and the Turks, according to their custom, defended themselves behind walls and ditches much better than in the open field. The Russians were compelled to raise the sieges of Modon and Coron; the expedition against Tripolitza failed; and at the end of May the invaders were forced to re-embark their troops and leave the unfortunate Greeks to their fate. That fate was melancholy enough, for the vengeance of the raging Turks was exercised with the same enormities as were perpetrated upon the Greeks in Chios and other places during the last war.

The undertakings of the Russians at sea were more successful, because they were under the direction, not of the high-admiral Alexis, but of captain Gregg, who commanded for him, and of vice-admiral Elphinstone. Their object was to fall in with and attack the Turkish fleet in the Archipelago and on the coast of Asia. They succeeded in their design; Elphinstone, with five ships of the line and two frigates, attacked the Turkish fleet of sixteen ships of the line and eleven xebecs, injured it severely, and compelled the enemy to run for safety and protection under the guns of Napoli di Romania. Elphinstone did not desist from his attack upon the Turks even in their place of refuge, but continued to cannonade their ships for two days (May 15th and



16th) ; they at length escaped, however, and sailed to Chios, whither the Russian fleet followed them as soon as the ships had again taken on board some of the troops which had been disembarked in the Morea. The Turks now sent 30,000 Arnauts and Bosnians, who most cruelly devastated the country. In the mean time, the insurrection had spread amongst the Greek islands, and at the end of July their inhabitants made a formal application to be taken under the protection of the Russians. The Russian fleet had long been searching for that of the Turks to no purpose ; at length, however, they discovered it lying in the channel of Chios, between that island and the coast of Asia. They came up to it in this position on the 24th of June, and on the 5th of July Spiridof, with ten Russian ships, attacked fifteen Turkish sail of the line: the Turkish admiral's ship was blown up, and the victory remained with the Russians. The Russian admiral had also the misfortune to lose his ship, which took fire in consequence of being entangled with one of the enemy's, and was totally consumed ; the officers were saved, but the whole of the crew, amounting to 700 men, fell a prey to the flames. The Turks, terrified by their defeat, were imprudent enough to cut their cables and to run into the narrow bay of Tchesme, where their ships were driven one against another and had no room to tack or manœuvre ; this induced the English, who were in command of the Russian fleet, to make an attempt at burning the whole fleet. The whole merit of the execution of this bold plan was due to the English, to whom by family descent Cruse, the captain of admiral Spiridof's ship, also belonged ; the glory remained with the Russians, and the Orlofs received the reputation and substantial rewards.

It was three Englishmen who conducted the whole of the exploit at Tchesme: Elphinstone blockaded the Turkish ships, Gregg directed the cannonade, and lieutenant Dugdale was entrusted with the dangerous commission of guiding the fire-ship by which the fleet was to be set in flames. At the very moment of starting, the Russians who were with Dugdale on board the fire-ship left him exposed to the danger, leapt into the water and swam away ; he alone steered the ship, and set fire to one of the Turkish vessels, which rapidly conveyed the flames to the rest of the fleet. Only one

ship of 50 guns and five xebecs remained unconsumed, and these were carried away by the Russians. The small town of Tchesme, also, with its fort, batteries, and cannon, was taken by the Russian fleet.

Whilst Alexis Orlof was thus raised to all the dignity of a hero by the instrumentality of the English, his brother Gregory also became distinguished, and received imperial honours on account of other persons' merits. He at first received extraordinary praise because he ventured to travel to Moscow at the empress's request when every one was fleeing from the city on account of the plague. In this he undoubtedly displayed resolution and courage, and his example restored order and confidence. To this praise he is fully entitled, but he received commendation also for things which not he but others had done. Surgeon Todte and privy-councillor Volkof had adopted admirable measures to stay the spread of the epidemic; all these were placed to the credit of Orlof, and he had no sooner returned to Petersburg than the empress caused a triumphal arch to be erected to his honour before Czarskoeselo, and to be graced with the following inscription: "*In honour of the man who delivered Moscow from the plague.*"

Similar honours were destined for Alexis on his return to Petersburg, whither he hastened to celebrate his triumph. He received the broad ribbon of the order of St. George, which had by this time been bestowed upon many, and the honourable surname of Tchesmensky; and, in addition, he was rewarded for the services which the English had rendered, by the erection of a commemorative column, adorned in Roman fashion with prows of ships, on the same place on which the triumphal arch in honour of his brother had been previously raised. The empress moreover granted him double the sum which he asked for the prosecution of the naval war, and which, according to his custom, was unusually large. On his way back to the fleet he stopped in Vienna, where he exhibited such a degree of insolence and royal extravagance as astonished and terrified the courtiers. His character was in fact so hateful, that many writers have related as credible the fable of his having carried off a woman from Leghorn who was supposed to stand in the way of the empress. In that city he met with a female adventurer who called herself

countess Tarakanof; he allured her on board his ship, and sent her to Petersburg. A report was immediately put in circulation that this woman was a daughter of the empress Elizabeth,\* whom Orlof in this way placed in the power of Catharine. The fleet remained for a whole year in the Archipelago after both the Orlofs had returned to Petersburg in 1773; the results of its operations during the four years in the Mediterranean is thus summed up in a German journal which has been printed by Schlözer in his Correspondence. "By the yearly reinforcements sent from Russia, the merchant ships taken from the Turks and Ragusa, and the numerous ships which had been bought from the English during the war, the Russian fleet finally amounted to sixteen ships of the line, three galliots, twenty-three frigates, nine polacres, nineteen xebecs, nine brigantines, and sixteen sloops—in all, ninety-five sail. The support of the Russian fleet in the Levant during the whole war cost the empire thirty-two millions of Venetian zechins; the prizes (provisions, ships, and ammunition excepted) amounted to eight millions of zechins."

Romantzof's campaign in 1771 was retarded by a variety of circumstances, and Falkenskiöld may be right in alleging that he intentionally protracted and delayed the movements of the army, in order to prolong the time of his holding a court in his quarters; however that may be, the grand vizier first put himself in motion in July. The subordinate commanders, Olitz, Weissmann, and Oserof, had in the mean time attacked several places. In March, Giurgevo had been taken by the Russians and again lost in June, nor were they able to maintain possession of Tuldsha. Repnin may be said at that time to have been almost at open enmity with Romantzof,

\* It is said, as in the story of Caspar Hauser, that Alexis, during his sojourn in Leghorn (1771), with the aid of the English consul, John Dick, seized, carried off, and sent to Petersburg, where she died in prison, a certain princess Tarakanof, who was stated to be a daughter of the empress Elizabeth by Alexis Razumofsky. The gossiping Wraxall, in the first part of his "Memoirs of his own Time," pp. 187—197, has treated the whole affair at length. The same story, which resembles that of Caspar Hauser as much as one egg does another, is found in a different version, but quite as extraordinarily detailed, in Castera, vol. ii. p. 83, &c.

and this may partly account for the Russians proving unable to hold their ground south of the Danube, where they had got a firm footing in Isaktchy, when the grand vizier advanced with his army. Repnin, on this occasion, behaved as he had formerly done at Warsaw; for the Turks had no sooner taken Tuldsha in June, than, without any further inquiry, he caused not only the Russian commander, but his officers also, to be arrested. Besides, he paid no attention to the commands which had been issued by Romantzof, who had ordered him to attack the 30,000 Turks who were marching against Bucharest. His refusal on this point, however, did great honour to his military genius and skill, and was justified by the event. When he was recalled, his successor, Essen, obeyed the command, and attempted to take the Turkish camp not far from Bucharest by storm, but was repulsed with the loss of several thousand men and many pieces of cannon. The Turks did not understand how to profit by their recent successes; they divided the army which had crossed the Danube into several parts, and the grand vizier remained on the farther side of the river, intending to cross at the end of autumn. He most foolishly thought that Romantzof would wait his arrival in his camp. That, however, he did not do, for he was neither deficient in courage nor military skill, but on the contrary, in the beginning of October, he pushed two divisions of the main army forward beyond the Danube, under the command of Miloradovitch and Weissmann.

The grand vizier himself with the main army was encamped near Babadagh, in the Dobrudsha, and there considered himself securely protected by the fort, and by trenches which he had thrown up, whilst two divisions were separated from him, one of which was encamped at Tuldsha and the other at Matchin. On the same day (October 20), these two positions were attacked by the Russian generals, the Turks beaten and routed, all their artillery and baggage taken, their magazines fell into the hands of the Russians, and both the towns and castles were conquered. In the following night an assault was made on the main army at Babadagh and the trenches carried. The Turks retreated precipitately, and left their camp and artillery in the hands of the Russians, who also took the town of Babadagh itself. This occurred

at the time when the several cabinets interested in the question had come to an understanding respecting the partition of Poland; the Russians, therefore, retired behind the Danube, and accepted the proffered mediation of Prussia and Austria for negotiations for a peace. It will afterwards appear that these negotiations neither led nor could lead to any result, because Prussia and Austria had interests of the same kind as Russia—to despoil the weak, as they proved in the same year in the case of Poland.

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## CHAPTER XLII.

### FIRST PARTITION OF POLAND.

THE condition of Poland at this time was indescribably lamentable: the government as well as the diet were slaves to Russia, and generally despised, and the confederations for the maintenance of freedom and independence more resembled bands of robbers than legal and political associations. The Russians had indeed recalled Repnin from Warsaw, and his successor was complaisant, friendly, and apparently pliant. Volkonsky deceived the government in Warsaw by the kindness and affability of his demeanour. In order to prevent them from taking advantage of the circumstances of the Turkish war, he flattered and amused those who were friends of their country by promises, appeased the extravagant magnates by money, and thus withheld them from uniting with the confederates for the deliverance of their nation during the time in which a very devil in the form of a Russian perpetrated unspeakable cruelties in the country. General Dewitz caused every Polish nobleman who was taken prisoner in arms by his Russians to be cruelly mutilated without further inquiry. This enraged the Poles still more; the whole country was traversed from one end to the other by bands who called themselves confederates. Immediately after Krasinski and Potocki had taken refuge among the Turks, a new confederacy was set on foot in Lithuania in March, 1769, and



issued a very threatening manifesto. In November of the same year a new general confederation was proclaimed in Biala, or Bilitz, at the opposite extremity of the kingdom, at which deputies were present from all parts of Poland and from Lithuania.

The king of Poland celebrated a joyous carnival in Warsaw, and distinguished himself by the gallantry and elegance of his deportment, and the splendour of his equipage and dress, at the very time in which the confederates appeared in the immediate neighbourhood of Warsaw, after having fortified the convent and town of Czenstochau. This took place in February, 1770; on the 9th of April the confederates even announced that the king was deposed, and an interregnum begun. The Russian generals Weymarn, Dewitz, and Suvarof, who now first appeared upon the stage of public life, caused one crowd of men after another to be dragged away into exile and misery in the wilds of Russia, and cruelly mutilated others. Suvarof distinguished his first appearance in Poland by a brilliant victory over Oginski in September, 1770, and thereby prevented the Polish nobles, who were anxious about the preservation of their estates, from joining the malcontents in arms.

Dumourier, who supplied the confederates with money as long as Choiseul remained minister, fell into a dispute with Pulawski in June, 1771. The latter, whose confederates had now taken possession of the castle of Cracow, ascribed to Dumourier the loss of the skirmish at Landseron, which has been improperly called a battle. A month after this affair the confederates published an appeal addressed to all the Poles, urging them to join their ranks and drive the Russians out of their country; whereupon the Russians issued orders to treat all the Poles who were taken prisoners as criminals. All civil administration in Poland was at that time completely at an end: the military commanders ruled in their several districts where they happened to be stationed with their troops. Volkonsky, who was in Warsaw, was very disagreeable to the king, notwithstanding the complaisance and courtliness of his manners; and Stanislaus, finding it no longer tolerable to be completely overlooked in his own capital, sent a humble embassy to Petersburg to effect if possible the recall of the Russian ambassador. The

application was attended with success, inasmuch as Russia now needed the services of a man in Poland who was deeply skilled in legal and diplomatic affairs: Volkonsky was recalled, and in his stead Saldern was appointed, who afterwards ruled Poland with more skill, but quite as much harshness as Repnin.

Saldern's first contrivance was the annihilation of what was called the union party to which Oginski belonged,—a party which wished to restore peace and unity between the different confederations and the king without the aid or intervention of foreign powers. This party was no sooner broken up than Saldern conducted himself in Warsaw just as if the Russian police had been already legally established in Poland. He declared the confederations, which were sanctioned by the unholy laws re-established by the Russians themselves, to be associations of robbers and murderers, and issued proclamations to the inhabitants of Warsaw, which were sometimes abusive, sometimes threatening, and occasionally really penal, and treated the king as his inferior and subject. During the winter Stanislaus lost, through a bold feat of Pulawski's, all the little remnant of respect which was left to him by the Russians; for on this occasion it was made manifest to all the world that his own countrymen did not recognise the royal dignity in his person. A Polish general received orders from the government in October to put an end to the committee of the confederates at Biala: the officer who received the commission failed in the execution of his orders, and Pulawski undertook a predatory expedition to Warsaw. A Russian colonel fell in with Pulawski's band on the last day of October and routed them, but in the mean while Warsaw was left without protection: Pulawski, who had escaped from the enemy with a small number of attendants, was desirous of taking advantage of this opportunity to carry off the king from his own palace.

The plan was, that a number of resolute men, who had partly provided themselves with Russian uniforms, should make their way secretly into the capital, seize the king as he was returning to his own palace from the fashionable society which assembled at his uncle's, and convey him to Czenstochau; whilst Pulawski, by a predatory expedition, allured the Russians out of Warsaw to follow him. This plan was really

carried into effect on the 3rd of November. Pulawski succeeded in drawing away the Russians from Warsaw; whilst thirty brave and adventurous Poles, among whom Kosinski, Lukaski, and Stravinski have obtained a melancholy celebrity, advanced rapidly to the city, and so distributed themselves in the darkness, that one party waited before the city whilst the other was to seize the king within the walls. The latter party learned that precisely at nine o'clock in the evening the king would return from his uncle, the high-chancellor's. Some of them assaulted the outriders and attendants of the king, whilst others seized the coachman and horses: the attendants were so frightened as to be unable to give heed to what was passing behind them. Five or six of the conspirators made themselves masters of the king's person at the very moment in which he was about to enter his coach, cut down his heiducks, slightly wounded the king himself, and immediately set him, without hat or hair-bag, upon a horse which they led off in the midst of their own. They failed, however, in finding the place in which they had left their companions without the city, and were separated from one another in the dark; the king's horse fell, and before he could be remounted he lost a shoe in the morass, and at length found himself alone with Kosinski. The latter, after having long ridden in the dark over stock and stone, either repented of his rashness when he arrived at Willamow, a distance of two hours and a half from Warsaw, and was alone with the king, or he was bribed. He permitted the king to send a note to Warsaw, commanding the presence of his guards. The order was obeyed, and the participators in this bold undertaking were forthwith accused of high treason, because it suited the purposes of the powers, who were about to divide the spoil, to give the affair all possible publicity; Pulawski was outlawed, and Lukaski, who had been captured, was executed.

This event occurred at the time in which Kaunitz, who coincided with Joseph against the opinion of his mother respecting the partition of Poland, at length obtained a promise from Russia, that in the peace about to be concluded with Turkey, they would not insist upon retaining possession of Moldavia and Wallachia, and would concede the possession of the immensely rich salt-works in Poland to

Austria; consequently the Austrian protection which had secretly been extended to the confederates immediately ceased. As Russia was now able for a time to dispense with the services of her armies on the Pruth and Danube, and the Austrian frontiers were strictly guarded, the confederates in Poland were speedily reduced; and afterwards nothing remained to bring the whole country under complete subjection but to put down the miserable royal government. Although the French at that time had sent Viomesnil to Poland to replace Dumourier, and the confederates offered a brave and vigorous resistance, they were unable to hold out for any length of time against the Russians, and in the beginning of the year 1772 they were first driven out of the town and then out of the citadel of Cracow, and obliged afterwards to evacuate Landskron, Czenstochau, and Tyrnieck. The fact of the confederates being immediately afterwards dispersed and the confederation dissolved, furnishes abundant proof that the continuance of the disturbances had been intentional on the part of Austria and Prussia. The termination of the war with the confederates did not lead to an immediate close of the negotiations among the three powers respecting the partition; the discussion of the various articles of the treaty occupied the former half of the year 1772. The pens of the diplomatists proved insufficient to bring the affair to a satisfactory conclusion, and recourse was again had to the generals and their Cossacks. General Elmpt advanced into Poland with a new Russian army, and then the defensive treaty respecting the partition of Poland was signed in Petersburg on the 5th of August.

By this partition Russia obtained 2200 German square miles of territory, inhabited by 1,500,000 people; Austria between 1500 and 1600 square miles, the salt-springs of Wielicza, and 2,500,000 subjects; Prussia 700 square miles, and about 900,000 people. The superficial extent of Poland at that time was 9057 square miles. This violation and partition of the territory of an independent kingdom was besides aggravated by the contempt with which the inhabitants were treated; for both the nation and the king were required formally to consent to their spoliation, and certify their satisfaction by documentary evidence.

Saldern had been at that time recalled and replaced by



Stackelberg, who, although of a more courtly and refined nature than his predecessor, was equally studious to violate the usual and becoming forms of politeness towards the king. Stanislaus, indeed, was entitled to no real respect; for on the one hand he had sold his nation and himself to strangers out of mere feelings of empty vanity, and on the other evinced a desire to play the part of a patriot. Inasmuch as the Russians were now opposed by the government and the members of the general confederation of Radom, who had been of the highest service to them in 1768, they suffered the four chief enemies of the government to return to Poland, set at liberty the bishop of Kaminiec, who had also been taken prisoner, and persecuted their own *protégé* Radzivil. The latter possessed immense wealth, was the owner of the greater part of Lithuania, and maintained his own troops in that province; but, incensed by the universal oppression exercised by the Russians, he came to a rupture with them, and left the country; the Russians took their revenge on his property, confiscated his estates, carried off his plate and movables, and conveyed his library, which was one of the richest in Europe, to Petersburg, where it was afterwards converted into a public library. In order to gain his assent to the document which they wished to extort from the nation, they offered to restore him everything of which he had been robbed except his library and plate; but he answered, that his ancestors had lived free, and he would die free.

The same kind of vengeance was inflicted upon the aged chancellor and his nephew, who had subscribed an admirably written manifesto, which most completely refuted the sophisms of the venal perverters of justice, and proved the injustice of the pretensions of the three powers. The estates of Czartorinski, which lay within that portion of Poland taken possession of by the Prussians, were confiscated; and Austria followed the same course with those of the starost Kiseki of Lemberg, who refused to do homage to their usurpation. An attempt was made to force upon the senate, from which all opposing members were carefully excluded, a resolution to summon a diet of the nation, which was to grant the final confirmation of the injustice; but only thirty out of about 120 senators assembled.

This small number of magnates resisted the urgent de-



mands of the ambassadors of the three powers and of the commanders of the troops who were encamped around their place of assembly till the 19th of April, 1773; on which day, surrounded and besieged by soldiers, they first gave their assent to a call of the general diet of the kingdom. They had no sooner done so, than they were commanded to abstain from all further meetings. Before the diet assembled, a protest had, however, been made in an assembly at Cracow by prince Czartorinski, high chancellor of Lithuania, the primate of Poland, the high chancellor of the kingdom, and others of the chief nobles, against such a diet as that which was about to meet, and which they called a conspiracy to destroy the rights and privileges of their country by force. The powers, who regarded might as right, paid no attention whatever to the protest. The diet in due time met, and the armies of the three powers advanced, in order to compel its members to acknowledge the deed of partition, and to force upon them the adoption of a paper drawn up by themselves in three-and-twenty articles, as the future constitution of Poland.

Complete success would never have been gained through the diet alone, and recourse was therefore had to the anarchical Polish constitution, in order to carry out the views of the three powers by the instrumentality of the venal Poninski and of the king, who was decoyed into acquiescence by the promise of a yearly stipend of 1,200,000 florins. The diet was first compelled to assume the form and adopt the laws of a confederation (*sub nexu confederationis*), and, in consequence of this step, Poninski, now appointed grand-marshal, became, according to the Polish laws, in some measure military ruler of the country, as long as such a confederation lasted. The scheme was completely successful; the vain king, whose patriotic declamations had been universally disseminated since October, 1772; the Czartorinskis and other magnates, who had made and issued such high-sounding protestations in Cracow, all thinking upon the flesh-pots of Egypt, subscribed the confederation. The diet, whose sittings were only allowed to extend to six weeks, were next to elect a committee invested with unconditional powers, as in the time of the disputes respecting the dissidents; it was a long time, however, before those members of the diet who neither belonged to the party which was to be bought,

nor to that which was to be frightened, could be brought to acquiesce in such a measure. The six weeks appointed by law had elapsed, before the menaces and military demonstrations of the powers proved efficient in compelling the diet to nominate a committee, and grant it all the rights and privileges of a *plenum*.

Even the committee itself stoutly defended the rights of the nation; and three of its members continued their resistance when all the others had yielded. Compared with the German princes in the time of Bonaparte, these Polish magnates must be admired as Scævolas and Catos. There was no hope either of aid or protection, and the patriotic Poles were exposed to much greater danger of bad treatment than Bonaparte would have inflicted upon a patriotic German prince, had such a being existed. Some fifty or sixty men, Russians and Austrians, were billeted in the houses of the most distinguished Polish nobles in Warsaw; the Czartorinskis and Lubomirskis were threatened with banishment; and the estates of almost all those who either hesitated to give their assent or refused it, were ruined by excessive impositions; in the cases of many individuals of great wealth as much as 100,000 ducats was extorted.

The committee, at length unable to offer any longer resistance, yielded in August to the imperious dictates of the powers. The diet was again assembled; and as it had now assumed the form of a confederation, its decisions no longer required unanimity of opinion, but depended on the votes of the majority; still, however, it continued to defend the privileges of the nation till September, and then only adopted the treaty of partition, by virtue of which a third of the kingdom was sacrificed, by a majority of two. The senate concurred in everything which was proposed, and promised, by means of plenipotentiaries, to come to an understanding with the ambassadors of the three powers respecting the form of government to be maintained in the remaining two-thirds of Poland, and the circumstances connected with those who professed the Greek or the Protestant faith. On the 19th of November the king subscribed all that the senate had approved. The most extraordinary measures were now forced upon the nation after the conclusion of this compulsory treaty; and the cruel irony with which the diploma-

tists imposed on the remnant of the mutilated kingdom as beneficent provision, the maintenance of that anarchy by which Poland had already been sunk so low in the scale of nations, will be seen from the commencement of a ministerial note which was sent to the government in September, 1773.\*

The diet, however, still continued to resist the oppressive demands of the spoilers; but such resistance merely served to prolong and increase the sufferings of the unfortunate country. Whilst the nobles in the following year, 1774, and in the first three months of 1775, were striving against the formal acceptance of the territorial cessions which had been agreed to by the committee, and their concessions respecting the constitution, the other part of the nation, which

\* It would be useless in this place to enumerate the whole of the single articles; we shall therefore merely give the introductory passages of the original, and subjoin four of the *general* resolutions. They run as follows:—"The courts are so strongly interested in the pacification of Poland, that while the treaties are prepared for signing and ratifying, their ministers think that not an instant of that precious interval should be lost in restoring order and tranquillity to that kingdom. They will therefore communicate to the commission a part of those fundamental laws, to the acceptance of which our courts will not permit the least obstacle or delay.—1. The crown of Poland shall be elective *for ever*, and all order of succession remain prohibited. Every person who shall attempt to infringe this law shall be declared an enemy of the country, and prosecuted accordingly.—2. Strangers who aspire to the throne, frequently being the occasion of divisions and troubles, shall hereafter be excluded from it; and a law shall be enacted that, in future, none but a native Pole, born a gentleman, shall be elected king of Poland and grand-duke of Lithuania. The son and grandson of a king shall not be elected immediately upon the death of his father, or of his grandfather; and he shall not be eligible till after the interval of two reigns.—3. The government of Poland shall be, and continue for ever, a free and independent government, of a republican form.—4. The true principles of that government, consisting in a strict observance of the laws, and in an equal balance of the three orders, viz., the king, the senate, and the nobility: these shall form a permanent council, in which the executive power shall be vested. Into this council shall be admitted persons of the order of nobility, who have, hitherto, been excluded from the administration of affairs, in the interval of diets," &c.—By these laws the house of Saxony, and other foreign princes, who might have been able to preserve the integrity of the rest of Poland, were excluded from the throne; the *liberum veto*, with the other dangerous privileges of the nobility, was re-established, and all the disorders were perpetuated.

had nothing either to gain or to lose by constitution or partition, was suffering all the evils of war in the midst of peace, because no one had troubled himself about its condition and interests for an incredible time, and it appeared to be forgotten even by Providence. The termination of the Polish affairs was delayed by a fresh outbreak of a war with the Turks and by Pugatchef's rebellion, for the Russians required to employ those troops elsewhere which had been sent into Poland to overawe and constrain the resolutions of the diet. The war with Turkey was no sooner ended, and Pugatchef executed in January, 1775, than the diet expressed its concurrence in the laws which had been prescribed by foreigners and accepted by the committee. Poland at least gained so much by this step, that it now received friendly protection till 1786 against the harassing insults and injuries which were inflicted by the Prussians and Austrians.

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## CHAPTER XLIII.

### WAR WITH TURKEY—TREATY OF KUTCHUK KAINARDJI— PUGATCHEF'S REBELLION.

THE negotiations between the Russians and the Turks had been opened in Fokshani in 1772. They were carried on, as it must be said, with the *assistance* of Prussia and Austria, for the Russians had expressly refused what diplomatists understand by mediation. At this moment also the intervention of Austria and Prussia was ridiculous, they being actually engaged, in connexion with Russia, in despoiling Poland, and making it wholly dependent on Russian power.

The dreadful Gregory Orlof, the favourite of the empress, was ostensibly to play the chief part in the congress at Fokshani,\* whilst the real business was entrusted to Obres-

\* Before his departure from Petersburg, preparations were made for his journey as for that of one of the most powerful monarchs; he had marshals, chamberlains, grooms of the chambers, pages, and imperial servants, and went to the first sitting of the congress in a carriage



kof, who had been formerly ambassador in Constantinople. This congress was actually opened on the 19th of August, 1772; and it has been affirmed that Orlof intentionally insulted the Turks, one of whom he personally maltreated, in order that he might figure as a great military hero in a new war. At this very time, however, he was supplanted in the empress's favour by a successful rival, who for some time publicly assumed all the rights of a husband; on this account he left Fokshani very suddenly in September for Petersburg. On his departure the congress was at once broken up; and neither Gregory's insolent behaviour towards the Turkish plenipotentiaries, nor the preparations and armaments of both powers which were made during the congress, allowed any reasonable expectations to be entertained of a favourable result.

Gregory Orlof left his embassy, the negotiations for peace and his diplomatic duties, without the command or permission of the empress, to hasten in his rage to Petersburg, where a ministerial intrigue, conducted by Panin and prince Baratinsky, had set up a rival against him: they had succeeded in inducing the empress to give Orlof's place and the chamber which he had left in the palace to Vassilitchikof, an officer in the guards. This man, however, was only a substitute for Orlof in the grossest sense of the term; he therefore maintained his ascendancy for but twenty-two months. Gregory's journey to Petersburg filled the empress with the greatest dread; it is true she caused him to be detained at Gatchina, but he set her at defiance, and Catharine negotiated. The empress spared Gregory, sought to win him over, and yielded to his demands, as she did afterwards to those of Potemkin, because she wished to employ the services of both against a party which was anxious to elevate her son to the throne, just as Jupiter is represented

which was accompanied by four state carriages. The procession was preceded by a troop of hussars and a hundred and fifty servants on foot in magnificent liveries. His kitchen, cellars, and all the rest were in the same style of splendour, and the jewels on his dress were of immense value. It is said that Gregory wished to remove Romantzof from his command, in order that he himself might be at the head of an army in the Crimea, his brother Alexis in command of a fleet in the Archipelago, and Theodore of another in the Black Sea.

by Homer as availing himself of the hundred-handed Briareus against Juno and the other gods. He received immense sums of money, a marble palace, splendid services of plate, and was allowed to exhibit his wealth and his brutality at all the courts of Europe.

The negotiations at Fokshani, which had been interrupted by Orlof's sudden departure, were opened again in October at Bucharest, but in March (1773) the negotiators found it impossible to agree on the terms of a peace, and the war was renewed. The grand vizier was an able statesman, but neither desirous, nor capable of personally conducting a war; he had, however, made excellent use of the time which was spent in negotiating at Fokshani and Bucharest, in some measure to restore discipline in his army, and order and quiet in the kingdom. He engaged the services of the French, who were no longer of any use in Poland, especially of those who were versed in the science of gunnery and engineering, in order to make the Turkish artillery at least serviceable, which it had not been before.

The Turks had by this time again become masters of Egypt, which Ali Bey had long governed as an independent state. The Russians and their fleet in the Archipelago proved not only unable to uphold Ali Bey, but they were obliged to evacuate the island of Lemnos, which they had previously taken at a great expenditure and loss. The same Capudan-Pasha, or high-admiral, who had gained such great renown by the reconquest of the islands and the restoration of the fleet, which had been nearly annihilated within a few years, now distinguished himself also by the eminent services which he rendered in the campaign on the Danube, whilst the grand vizier prudently held back. General Weissmann had gained some advantages at Silistria, but had retreated, and the grand vizier in May sent one of the small divisions of his army against Kutchuk, where he gained an important victory, and made prisoner the younger brother of prince Repnin, well known by his conduct in Poland. Weissmann first took revenge upon the Turks for this victory by surprising them at Karassu, on the 7th of June, and capturing sixteen pieces of cannon; Roman-tzof next crossed the Danube, and attacked Silistria with

his whole force. The commander in Silistria was Hassan Pasha, high-admiral and seraskier of the Dardanelles; he succeeded in repulsing the Russians, who on this occasion suffered considerable loss. Hassan was rewarded with the title of *Ghasi*, or the *victorious*.

In the following month the imprudence of the seraskier of Karassu gave the Russians an opportunity of surprising the Turks, who were encamped near Kainardji, which led to their defeat and the loss of twenty-five pieces of cannon, whilst the Russians on their part had to deplore the loss of the brave general Weissmann. The two main armies, the one under the grand vizier and the other under Romantzof, were now in presence of each other: but the Turks sought to avoid a decisive engagement, although the grand vizier had appointed a most unusual number of new seraskiers, and had called Hassan Pasha, seraskier of the Dardanelles, to his head-quarters. Several Russian generals served under Romantzof, with whose names the world became better acquainted at the end of the century. Dolgoruki, the conqueror of the Tatars, was Romantzof's second in command, and Suvarof and Kamenskoi were each at the head of separate divisions. The Russians contented themselves with exercising revolting cruelties, but were resolved to remain on the farther side of the Danube till they had effected something decisive. A Russian division made a successful attack upon a portion of the Turkish army at Karassu on the 12th of October, but the grand vizier remained quietly in his camp at Shumla, for he had not confidence enough in his generals or in his troops to venture on a pitched battle. Three days after the defeat at Karassu, he was, however, fortunate enough to vanquish one of the three divisions of the Russian army, which was wasting the country, whilst the two others, under Ungern and Dolgoruki, pushed forward in all haste to Varna, in order to take that city by storm. This attempt also proved unsuccessful, although the Russians had made good their entrance into the town. After they had lost many of their men and some pieces of artillery, one division retreated upon Karassu and the other upon Ismail. Winter brought a cessation of hostilities; on the 24th of December, 1773, sultan Mustapha died, and his successor,

Abdulhamet, wisely retained the prudent and cautious grand vizier of his predecessor.

The new sultan might have concluded the most advantageous peace which the Turks could ever hope to obtain, and according to Von Hammer's account, he himself, his grand vizier, the other ministers, and the army in general, were anxious for a peace; but the sultan had been unfortunately brought up in the pietism of Islam, and the Mahometan Jesuits had much more influence with him than the advice of his wisest ministers, his own inclinations, and the representations of the Austrian and Prussian ministers. No sooner had Pugatchef's rebellion given rise to an internal war in Russia, and the Poles shown a disposition to offer a continued resistance to the demands respecting their constitution, than Romantsof offered to make the articles which had been previously signed by the Turks in Bucharest the foundations of the present peace; but according to Von Hammer, the theological jurists or ulemas would hear nothing of the proposal, and therefore the grand vizier was obliged to continue to carry on the war. He remained true to his defensive system, and kept within his camp at Shumla till Romantsof again crossed the Danube in the middle of June, 1774, and took advantage of the unexampled disorder which reigned among the Turks. Two of Romantsof's three divisions, one under Soltikof, the other under Suvarof and Kamenskoi, offered battle on the 20th to the two divisions of the Turkish army to which they were severally opposed, whilst Romantsof himself remained with a third division in camp at Silistria. Soltikof came into contact with Hassan Pasha Ghasi, whom he defeated after an obstinate engagement, but Hassan retired in good order. Suvarof and Kamenskoi, who attacked the Reis-Effendi in his camp at Koslidshe, gained a much easier victory. The Turks did not await the attack of the Russians; their whole army, of 25,000 men, fell suddenly into disorder, forsook their standards and fled, as the Tatars had done on the Larga, and left the whole of their baggage and artillery in the hands of the astonished Russians. The panic or treachery which caused the rout of this division immediately afterwards infected the main body of the army.



The army of the grand vizier is said to have been 100,000 strong, but Romantzof no sooner advanced to attack them than the whole cavalry fled directly to Constantinople, and practised unspeakable cruelties\* by the way, so that, in order to be free from their depredations and violence, the government was obliged to send them in all haste to Asia Minor. The grand vizier presently found himself suddenly surrounded by the enemy in his camp at Shumla, and could neither attack his enemies nor retreat from his position. Romantzof and Panin, who then conducted Catharine's foreign affairs, had at that moment many political reasons to lead them to wish for an end to the war; Romantzof, therefore, in Kutchuk Kainardji, in July, 1774, offered to agree to a peace on the same conditions on which it had been previously offered. The whole of Europe was now filled with the glory of Romantzof and that of his empress; Poland and the Crimea were forgotten, and nothing was heard of but his magnanimity towards the Turks, although every one who reads the conditions stated in the note,† and carefully compares them with the history of the following time, will perceive that the approaching dissolution of the Turkish empire was therein

\* Von Hammer, quoting an authority which we have not seen, relates "that old men and women who were not fortunate enough to find safety in flight were put to death, those who escaped with life were dragged forth and trampled in the mud, and the soldiers dashed the heads of the children against the walls."

† The treaty of peace contained twenty-eight articles and two secret ones, which related to the payment of 40,000,000 of rubles and the evacuation of the Archipelago. The articles which were published confirmed all those conditions which had been previously settled at Bucharest and in the congress of Fokshani, viz., the freedom of the Tatars in the Crimea, Bessarabia, and the Kuban, with the exception of the religious dependence of Islam; the restoration of all their conquered countries, except the harbours of Kertsch and Yenikaleh; the restoration of the Russian conquests in Moldavia, Vallachia, Bessarabia, Georgia, Mingrelia, and in the Archipelago, with the exception of the two Kabardas, Asoph and Kinburn, and the release of all prisoners; *the free navigation of the sea of Marmora, the Black Sea, and the passage of the Dardanelles*; the greatest facilities and protection to all travellers, especially for the pilgrims to Jerusalem; the most honourable treatment of all ambassadors, consuls, and interpreters; the mild administration of Vallachia and Moldavia, ensured by ten special conditions. Thus, the Tatars and the Crimea were withdrawn from the Porte, and Vallachia and Moldavia placed under Russian protection.

announced. Whilst Catharine in reality released Moldavia, Vallachia, Bessarabia, Budjiak, and the Crimea from Turkey, and secured for her country the dominion of the Black Sea and the passage of the Dardanelles, she contrived to have her government magnified for its inexpressible magnanimity. Moreover, Potemkin took good care that those conditions of the treaty of Kutchuk Kainardji, which were in any wise advantageous to Turkey, should never be fulfilled.

About the time in which Poland was fully taken possession of by the Russians, and the empire of the Turks was threatened with destruction, an adventurer raised a commotion in the interior of Russia which seemed to threaten the empress herself, but in reality only brought ruin on the educated part of the nation, because neither the originator of the rebellion, nor those who attached themselves to his cause, were in a condition to offer any permanent opposition to an organised power. Russian peasants and Cossacks might be very suitable instruments for terrible devastations and the practice of enormous cruelties, and that indeed they proved themselves to be for a year and a half under Pugatchef; but they were by no means fit elements to lay the foundation of a permanent revolution. The rebellion in Russia of which we are now about to speak, had its origin in the circulation of a report that Peter III. had escaped from the hands of his murderers; an opinion which, however absurd in itself, was maintained by distinguished Russians and ecclesiastics, to whom Catharine's philosophy, her splendour and extravagance, and the insolence of her favourites, were equally hateful. Just as in the period of the false Dmitris, advantage was taken of this opinion by adventurers in various parts of Russia, and at various times, to excite disturbances or to promote personal designs. It is said that four Russians and a native of Montenegro had made attempts at various times to pass themselves for Peter III. previous to that of Pugatchef. He was more fortunate than his predecessors, and might have been very dangerous had he not preferred the character of a leader of bands of barbarians to that of an intelligent friend of the oppressed. During the two years of his dominion, he proved the worst friend to himself. He was a Don Cossack, who had originally served among his countrymen as a com-

mon soldier, and afterwards as an officer at the time of the conquest of Bender; at a later period he spent some time in Poland among monks and ecclesiastics, where his attention was first called to his alleged resemblance to Peter III. Pugatchef's countrymen, as well as almost all the other Cossacks of the Don, belonged to the old orthodox party or Roskolniks of the Greco-Russian Church; he no sooner returned than he found adherents among them, and in Malinkofka on the Volga first began to give himself out for Peter III.\* The Russians themselves paid very little heed to the extravagances which were exhibited by Pugatchef on his first appearance. He was seized in Malinkofka and brought to Kasan, but his guards were so negligent that he found means of escape, and immediately set about collecting adherents among his friends the Cossacks on the Volga, in the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea.

Pugatchef remained on the banks of the river Yaik† from the middle of the month of August, 1773, till the 17th of September; he then appeared with 300 Cossacks before the town of Yaitsk, and published a manifesto addressed to the orthodox believers, and calling upon them to acknowledge him as Peter III. The number of his partisans speedily became very great; immense crowds of the rudest tribes collected around him; but the unprovoked and useless cruelties which they perpetrated deterred all respectable and educated persons, who might have given some degree of importance to his cause, from joining in his enterprise. In the mean time, Pugatchef had collected an army of several thousand men, and a considerable number of cannon; but he besieged Orenburg without success from the beginning of October till the 9th of November, and he was equally unsuccessful in a subsequent attempt.

\* The dreadful nature of this rebellion may be at once learned, without going into details, from the two lists which are given as a supplement to the account in Büsching's Magazine:—1. A list of the churches which were plundered by Pugatchef and his rabble, which occupies three pages (52, 53, 54); and 2. A list of the persons who were murdered by Pugatchef, occupying 25 pages—a fearful catalogue of names.

† In order to extinguish all remembrance of Pugatchef's rebellion, the river Yaik had its name changed to Ural; Yaitsk to Uralsk; and the Cossacks of the Yaik to the Uralian Cossacks.

Pugatchef having defeated colonel Tchernitchef, who had been sent against him in December, and afterwards general Carr, it began to be thought he would make rapid progress ; but both he and his followers were utterly deficient in military capacity and in all sense of discipline and order. The peasants at first rallied around this barbarian adventurer, who was half monk and half soldier, because he proclaimed their freedom, sanctioned the rude outbreaks of their barbarous nature, and gave them opportunities for robbery and plunder. His success against his first opponents encouraged him to push northwards, and he now caused money to be struck in his name, as if he were the lawful emperor. Bibikof, to whom Catharine entrusted the command of the troops assembled from all quarters to act against the rebels, was slow and uncommonly cautious ; he did not live to see the end of the war ; but his subordinate commanders, Galitzin and Michelson, were more active. The rebellion assumed a dangerous aspect, because the Tatars, Kirghis, and Baskirs seemed disposed to take advantage of the occasion to shake off the Russian yoke. The people rushed in crowds to the standard of the pretended Peter III., and many of the Poles who had been banished from their country joined in the rebellion only because it was raised against their tyrants. The people in and around Moscow itself were anxiously looking for the near approach of the rebels, in order to break out. During Bibikof's illness, and up till the time of the nomination of a new commander-in-chief, Michelson appeared to have put an end to the rebellion, but it suddenly broke out again more violently than before.

Michelson defeated the rebels six or seven times in the field between the beginning of March and the end of May ; Pugatchef's partisans were routed, and he himself being hotly pursued, and accompanied only with some hundreds of followers, fled to the lake of Arga, and wandered about in the Ural Mountains. At this time Panin had received the chief command of the imperial army, and strengthened himself by reinforcements ; Pugatchef, nevertheless, presented himself anew, and wherever he appeared he collected an army. On the 4th of June, 1774, he suffered a new defeat on the Ufa, and again fled to the Ural ; but he no sooner returned again from the mountains in the beginning of July, than he found



himself at the head of 22,000 men. It then appeared as if all the Russian vassals would unite in his cause, with a view to deliver themselves from feudal bondage; but at this very time he committed three grand oversights, which made his downfall unavoidable. He excited the indignation of all who did not belong to the common rabble, by setting no bounds or measure to the cannibal cruelties which were perpetrated by his followers; as a Roskolnik and rude barbarian, he enraged the clergy and laity by the plunder and burning of churches and convents; and thirdly, at the decisive moment he gave a wrong direction to his army. He should have made every effort to reach Moscow before Michelson overtook him, for there was the seat of the old Russian faith and prejudices which he wished to restore; whereas, instead of that, he marched upon Kasan. He succeeded in conquering this city, formerly the capital of a Tatar kingdom; but when he found himself unable to reduce the citadel, he laid waste everything with fire and sword, and delayed till Michelson came up and compelled him to retire precipitately beyond the Volga.

He escaped from Michelson's pursuit, and on his retreat to the Volga burnt and destroyed all before him, wasted the cultivated land like a stream of lava, and again assembled a new army of 20,000 men. The severest blow was inflicted upon the industrious and moral colonies of Moravian brethren on the Volga, who at that time formed a species of German colony under Russian protection. In Saratof this monster caused all those who came in his way to be murdered without distinction; but his fate overtook him at the siege of Zaritzin. On the 22nd of August Michelson compelled the barbarians to raise the siege; on the 24th they were overtaken in their precipitate flight, defeated, cut down, or scattered. Pugatchef, completely separated from his followers, and accompanied by only sixty of his most faithful partisans, swam over the Volga, and found safety on the farther side in a desert 500 versts in extent, but was there cut off from all connexion with any inhabited countries. The Russians, notwithstanding, were only able to get possession of him by treachery; they won over some of the Cossacks who were made prisoners, among whom was Pugatchef's best friend, Antizof, released them from their imprisonment, and sent them over the Volga to deceive their friend,

and to take some opportunity of mastering his person. This opportunity did not offer itself till November, when they took him by surprise, bound him, and conveyed him to Goro-deck in the Ural, a place where Antizof's tribe was the most powerful. They afterwards delivered him up to the Russians in Simbirsk, who immediately conveyed him like a beast of prey to Moscow, where he was beheaded and quartered, in January, 1775, together with four of his principal followers.

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## CHAPTER XLIV.

RISE OF POTESKIN—MODE OF APPOINTING AND DISMISSING FAVOURITES—CONTINUED ENCROACHMENTS ON TURKEY AND THE CRIMEA—ARMED NEUTRALITY—MASSACRE OF TAURIS—SCHEME OF A NEW BYZANTINE EMPIRE—POMPOUS JOURNEY OF THE EMPRESS TO KHERSON.

UPON the decline of Vassilitchikof's favour, which lasted but twenty-two months, Gregory Orlof returned, and by his importunity and insolence regained his former place for a while. In 1774 he was driven from it a second time by the bold and colossal Potemkin, the only one perhaps of all the empress's favourites who felt a true passion, and wooed her affections on this ground alone, and not from ambition. He alone could console her majesty in secret, under the uneasy feelings occasioned by the war in Turkey, the rebellion of Pugatchef, and the vexatious misunderstanding that prevailed between the old favourite and the minister Panin. Potemkin grew presumptuous; success increased his pride, of which he soon became the victim.

One day, as he was playing at billiards with Alexis Orlof, he inconsiderately boasted of the favour he enjoyed; and even asserted that it entirely depended upon him to remove from court such persons as were displeasing to him. Orlof made a haughty reply. Upon this a quarrel ensued; in the heat of which Potemkin received a blow that occasioned the loss of an eye. This was not his only misfortune. Gregory Orlof, informed of the affray by his brother, ran to the empress, and requested Potemkin's removal from court.

Potemkin retired to Smolensk, his native place, where he remained almost a year in solitude, suffering much from his

eye,\* and his solitary exile from court. At one time he declared his resolution of turning monk; at another vaunted that he should become the greatest man in Russia. At length, in a sudden fit, he wrote to the empress, beseeching her to think of him. Her majesty immediately complied with his request, recalled, and placed him again in full possession of her favour. Orlof had been for several days at the sport of the chase. His absence afforded an opportunity for installing Potemkin at the palace; and on the return of the old favourite no complaints or reproaches could remove the new one from his exalted situation.

It may be deemed necessary in this place to explain what were the duties expected from, and the distinguished honours paid to, the favourites of Catharine.

When her majesty had made choice of a new favourite, she created him her general aide-de-camp, in order that he might accompany her wherever she went, without incurring public censure. From that period the favourite occupied in the palace an apartment under that of his royal mistress, with which it communicated by a private staircase. The first day of his installation he received a present of 100,000 rubles, and every month he found 12,000 placed on his dressing-table. The marshal of the court was ordered to provide him a table of twenty-four covers, and to defray all his household expenses. The favourite was required to attend the empress wherever she went, and was not permitted to leave the palace without asking her consent. He was forbidden to converse familiarly with other women; and if he went to dine with any of his friends, the absence of the mistress of the house was always required.

Whenever the empress cast her eyes on one of her subjects, with the design of raising him to the post of favourite, he was invited to dinner by some one of her female confidants, on whom she called as if it were by chance. There she would draw the new candidate into discourse, and judge how far he was worthy of her destined favour. When the opinion she had formed was favourable, a significant look apprised the confidant, who, in her turn, made it known to the object

\* It has been reported that the injury done to his eye might have been cured; but that, in his impatience, he burst a slight tumour that had formed on the side of the ball. Ségur says, that he purposely put out his eye to remove a blemish that impaired his comeliness.

of her royal mistress's pleasure. The next day he was examined as to the state of his health by the court physician, and as to some other particulars by Mademoiselle Protasof, one of the empress's ladies, after which he accompanied her majesty to the Hermitage, and took possession of the apartment that had been prepared for his reception. These formalities began upon the choice of Potemkin, and were thenceforth constantly observed.

When a favourite had lost the art of pleasing, there was also a particular manner of dismissing him. He received orders to travel; and from that moment all access to her majesty was denied him: but he was sure of finding at the place of his retirement such splendid rewards as were worthy of the munificent pride of Catharine. It was a very remarkable feature in her character that none of her favourites incurred her hatred or vengeance, though several of them offended her, and their quitting office did not always depend on herself.

Potemkin's rule commenced at the very time in which the peace of Kutchuk Kainardji was concluded (July, 1774). The disputes with Poland and the rebellion of Pugatchef were no sooner ended than he immediately violated every condition of that treaty, well knowing that the empress would approve of everything he might do. Dowlet Gherai, who was elected khan by the now independent Tatars, still remained much more favourably disposed to the Turks than to the Russians; the latter, therefore, by means of money and intrigues raised up a pretender against him; and then, under pretence of an armed mediation, a Russian army occupied a part of the Crimea, and seemed disposed to make the khan a prisoner, and to seize the whole province. Dowlet Gherai took refuge with the Turks in April, 1775, and Sahim Gherai, who was a mere creature of Russia, was elected in his stead, to the great satisfaction of the Russians, who foresaw that the majority of the Tatars would oppose the new khan, and thus furnish them with another pretext for a renewal of hostilities. A war with the Porte appeared unavoidable, and Romantzof received commands to collect a considerable army on the Dniepr, whilst Repnin in Constantinople was endeavouring to deceive the sultan, and Potemkin betrayed the unfortunate Sahim Gherai.



By this time Potemkin had ceased to be the personal favourite of the empress; but he himself recommended his successors in that post to her notice. Potemkin was indispensable to Catharine in consequence of those colossal undertakings which procured her the name of *great*; and because the fear with which he inspired all her enemies secured to her the possession of the throne, which she withheld from her son Paul. Zavadofsky had become the occupant of the apartments of the royal palace in November, 1776, and been created a major-general; as soon, however, as he fell under Potemkin's suspicion, the latter authoritatively insisted upon his dismissal. Zavadofsky had turned against his patron, and was an eager favourer of the Orlofs and field-marshal Romantzof. For this reason Potemkin succeeded in obtaining leave of absence for the favourite in July, 1777, in order to provide a substitute during his temporary retirement who should eventually displace him. Potemkin had long before selected a major Zoritch for his adjutant, who was politically insignificant, but very attractive in his hussar uniform, with a view to present him to the empress. Zavadofsky had no sooner left the palace than he carried his design into effect, and the empress made Zoritch a colonel adjutant-general and her companion. At the expiration of nine months, he too fell under Potemkin's displeasure, and was obliged to retire, for the empress was completely under the control of her minister. Next came Korsakof, a handsome sergeant in the guards, who was suddenly raised to the rank of aide-de-camp general. He too was indignant at Potemkin's unbounded pride and avarice, but attempted in vain to open the eyes of the empress; he was obliged to yield to the influence of the indispensable tyrant after he had enjoyed the favour of the empress for fifteen months.

The circumstances of the year 1778 were peculiarly favourable to the accomplishment of Potemkin's plans of conquest, for war had broken out in the spring between France and England, and both powers were so fully occupied in the west that they had no leisure to attend to the concerns of the east. Potemkin, therefore, sent an army, commanded by Suvarof, against the Kuban and Budjiak Tatars, whilst other Russians penetrated into the Crimea and were guilty of the most cruel devastations. This led to the seizure of some Russian ships in the straits of the Dardanelles on the

part of the sultan, who was, however, unable to commence a war without the aid and co-operation of France. But that power, unwilling to break with Russia, insisted on mediating, and the sultan was forced to acquiesce. The result was, that the Russian ships were restored, and the sultan formally recognised Sahim Gherai as the rightful ruler of the Crimea.

Catharine was so pleased with the conduct of France on this occasion, that she embraced with alacrity the plan of the ARMED NEUTRALITY, which was devised by the French minister Vergennes; and in 1780 she put herself at the head of that league which was joined by almost all the powers of Europe except Great Britain. It was formed for the purpose of resisting the right asserted by our own navy to make prize of an enemy's goods, or of goods shipped for an enemy's port, wherever found, and even though covered by a neutral flag. The leading principle of the league was that *free ships make free goods*. Great Britain would not admit this; but at that time she did no more than expostulate with her good friend and ally the empress of Russia. It was not until the reign of Paul that she waged war for the maintenance of the opposite principle, which she has spontaneously repudiated since the beginning of her present conflict with Russia.

From this time forward Potemkin, Voltaire, and a host of flatterers, amused the empress with dreams of the restoration of a Byzantine empire, and the erection of a new capital on the Black Sea. Sahim Gherai prized the slavish title of a lieutenant-colonel in the guards of a foreign empress more than that of prince of a nation to which the Russian czars for many years had been vassals, and he renounced the national costume of his people in order to glitter in a Russian uniform and wear the decorations of the order of St. Anne. Potemkin contrived every month to alienate him more and more from his people, till at last this miserable man was induced to lay down his khanate, from which he derived a revenue of three or four millions of rubles, in order, as he thought, to revel peacefully in the enjoyment of some hundred thousand rubles, which Potemkin was to pay him as the newly-appointed Russian governor-general of Tauris, as the country was now to be called. Potemkin was too much accustomed to receive and not to give, and to contract debts without thinking of paying them, to give himself much concern about

the payment of the promised salary, although the empress was led to believe that the yearly sum always charged to her was in reality regularly paid to the khan. The shamelessness of the Russian government on this occasion fully equalled the audacity of their manifestoes respecting the partition of Poland, or that of the state-papers of a Genz and a Talleyrand. In the Russian manifestoes published in April, 1783, it was made as clear as the sun to the Tatars, that the empress and Potemkin were really proposing to confer upon them the most signal benefits. It was stated that the Tatars, as Russian subjects, were in future to be delivered from all the evils of their internal disputes, and by the incorporation of the Crimea, the Kuban, and the Eastern Nogais, an end was to be put to those oppressions from which they had hitherto suffered from the Turks and the Russians alternately. What was the correspondence between these promises and the subsequent reality, may be learned from all the works of recent travellers who have visited these districts, and give accounts of the Crimea and the Tatars at the present day. That numerous, free, and rich race of people, clothed in silks, and of noble appearance, has now dwindled into a crowd of starving beggars; their magnificent tented cities are become gipsy encampments, and their houses and palaces exhibit mere masses of ruin and decay.

These manifestoes, indeed, as is usually the case, were not intended for those to whom they were addressed, but merely to conceal in a cloud of words, from the eyes of those at a distance, the cruelties and bloodshed with which they were accompanied. The Tatars made an effort to defend their liberties, and their magnates made no secret of their dissatisfaction; Potemkin, therefore, had recourse to one of those heroic means which usually find defenders enough when they are applied for the support of the true faith and of autocratic government, and are only reviled and execrated in the hands of a Danton and a Robespierre. He proposed by a single massacre summarily to annihilate the malcontents, and to awe the rest into submission by the dread of a similar fate. Posorofsky received express orders to make himself master of the malcontents, their families, and adherents, and put them all to the sword; he, however, possessed moral courage enough to decline the business of an executioner. Potem-

kin's cousin was not so scrupulous. According to the accounts, whose unanimous testimony we are obliged to follow, even when it appears to us incredible, Paul Potemkin caused above 30,000 Tatars, of every age and sex, to be massacred in cold blood, and in this way procured for his cousin the easily-won title of the Taurian, and the place of grand-admiral of the Black Sea, and governor-general of the new province of Tauris.

The massacre in Tauris took place in April, 1783, and the Turks were unable to render any assistance to the Tatars without foreign support. Among the European powers, however, England was at that time fully occupied with the disturbances which in the following year brought Pitt to the helm of affairs; France was glad to see an end to the American war; Joseph II. was bound by the treaty of Tzarskoeselo; Frederic II. hoped to become master of Thorn and Dantzic, if Russia was well-disposed towards him; and Gustavus III. of Sweden was the only monarch who could have rendered any aid. In the very same year, however, Gustavus suffered himself to be induced to go to Friedrichshamm, where he sold himself to the empress; nothing, therefore, was now left to the Turks but to yield to their destiny. The sultan did what had been done by the king of Poland a few years before; by his consent he changed that into a righteous and legal possession which, being seized in the midst of peace, was previously a robbery. The whole territory of the Tatars, the Crimea, the island of Taman, and a great part of the Kuban were ceded to Russia, and a treaty of commerce was forced upon the Turks, by virtue of which the Russian consuls in the various ports of Turkey were erected into a power wholly independent of the government of the country. This treaty of commerce had been drawn up by Panin before he had been obliged to yield to the superior influence of Potemkin and withdraw from public affairs; and it was now concluded on the 10th of June, 1783. By virtue of this treaty the Turks were obliged to submit the decision of all mixed civil cases in which a Russian and a Turk were the respective parties, not to the local tribunals, nor to the higher authorities, nor to a court of arbitration, but to the Russian consul; and in all pecuniary transactions the claims of a Russian against a Turk were urged with much greater



strictness than in those cases in which the Turk was the claimant and the Russian the debtor.

In the eyes of the world, which regards only externals, Potemkin was now a great and admired statesman ; and so absolute was his sway over the empress herself, that she not only tolerated his insolence, his total neglect of all pecuniary obligations, his tyranny over all classes, and his imperial expenditure and magnificence, but allowed him to help himself to an unlimited extent out of the coffers of the state. Potemkin on the one hand did homage to the empress as if she were a goddess, and on the other he suffered himself to treat her with the most insolent familiarity and rudeness. He would even saunter from his own apartments into hers in his dressing-gown and slippers, with his stockings hanging down and his legs bare. He went so far as to extort from those who enjoyed the empress's favour, a part of the money which they received from her, and yet he allowed poor Sahim Gherai to starve. He never paid him the assigned pension of 100,000 rubles which was yearly debited to the empress's account, and even the displeasure of Catharine could not induce him to bestow upon this Russian *protégé* the simplest means of life.

The founding of a new Russo-Grecian capital, with which Potemkin now busied himself, was a magnificent piece of flattery for the empress, but for which she was unhappily obliged to pay too dear. Catharine indulged with Voltaire in those visionary schemes of a utopian Greece, of a civilisation of which she and not the people was to be the source, of an enlightenment, industry and trade to be carried into these conquered deserts by ukases and courtiers ; Potemkin acted according to this fancy. He first erected a city with buildings of every description, and then sought for inhabitants, or forcibly drove them for a time from all quarters, when he wished to make a court-spectacle of this theatrical city and to enchant the empress. It was of no consequence to him that his city fell to pieces and its inhabitants disappeared as soon as he turned away his eyes. The new city was called Kherson, a name long since obscured by that of Odessa ; the empress granted 18,000,000 rubles, most of which, however, Potemkin diverted to his own private use. The situation was badly chosen, and yet this shadow of a capital was for a

length of time charmed into existence by innumerable arts of fraud and open violence; and the deserts of which it was to be the metropolis were erected into a province, to which Potemkin gave the name of *Catharine's Glory* (Slava Ekatharina). Another province, somewhat farther to the north, near the celebrated falls of the Koidack, was also honoured with the name of the empress, and called Ekatarinoslaf.

The general to whom Potemkin at this time assigned the congenial task of havoc and destruction in the country of the Nogai Tatars and in Kuban, was Suvarof, a man who from that distant period till our own century had the misfortune to be continually employed as the instrument of a murderous military despotism. In Poland he executed three times those orders of annihilation which were issued from Petersburg. He destroyed the Turks and sacrificed the Russians by thousands at the will of Potemkin. He subsequently shared Paul's hatred against the French and every thought of civil freedom, and performed the same kind of heroic deeds for that madman's pleasure as he had previously done at the bidding of Potemkin. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest generals of modern times, but wholly destitute of humanity, for he sacrificed thousands without hesitation in order to secure a victory or storm a fortress, when either was calculated to produce a splendid effect though but for the moment. He not only flattered the empress, but even the common soldiers and their superstitions. Though he was a man of various knowledge, and had made himself master of all the arts of life as practised in the highest society, he assumed at court the character of a sort of court-fool, and acted often as if he were mad, merely in order to carry out some surprising piece of flattery. In the company of the common soldiers he affected the manners of the semi-barbarous Russian, lived as they did themselves, submitted to every privation which they might be called upon to endure, and knelt and prayed before every wayside image, often when the roads were deep with mud.

At the time when a high-flown sentimentality was the fashion in Germany, and the empress was past fifty, she indulged in a fit of romantic love for the insipid and spiritless Lanskoj. This turn in her affections was very agreeable to Potemkin, for Lanskoj neither took up the cause of the

destitute khan, nor yielded to the allurements of the king of Prussia, the emperor Joseph II., or the English, when they were desirous of engaging him in affairs of state. Potemkin freely permitted the empress to indulge her visionary love for the wonderfully handsome and youthful face which captivated her affections, and did not grudge her, among the many gross and degrading scenes of her life, the enjoyment of one romantic passion, after the manner of Werther and Siegwart, from the year 1780 till July, 1784. Catharine's love for Lanskoj had been romantic in his life, and her sorrow at his death was not less extravagant; but notwithstanding all this ideality, she had been also careful to show him substantial proofs of her affection at the cost of the country. She bestowed upon him not only all possible titles, orders, and decorations—diamonds, plate, and collections of every kind, but he left behind him in cash a property of 7,000,000 of rubles.

The fantastic mourning for Lanskoj was no sooner evaporated than the empress allowed Potemkin, who presented candidates for every office, to supply her with a substitute for her departed lover. In order to exclude all other pretenders, Potemkin on every such occasion was prepared to fill the vacancy; and with this view he had for some time made lieutenant Yermolof one of his adjutants. In 1785 this man became the declared favourite of the empress, and soon ventured to pursue a course which Lanskoj would never have thought of. He directed Catharine's attention to the tyranny of Potemkin, and gave her some hints respecting his behaviour towards Sahim Gherai. The empress expressed her displeasure without naming the person who had made her acquainted with the unhappy fate of the khan; Potemkin, however, easily guessed that no man in the empire would dare to speak ill of him to the empress except Yermolof. He therefore threateningly replied, "That must have been said by the *White Moor*," as he was accustomed to call Yermolof, on account of his fair countenance and flat nose. Catharine did not hesitate severely to reproach Potemkin for his harsh and unjust conduct towards the khan, and she even wavered for some months between her favourite and this son of the Titans, whom she regarded as her protector, and the creator of her

glory and her greatness. At the end of June, 1786, a fresh scene occurred, by which the empress was compelled to declare either for the one or the other. Yermolof had made a new attempt to alienate the empress from Potemkin; the latter, therefore, haughtily insisted that either Yermolof or he must retire from her service; Catharine felt herself constrained to adhere to Potemkin, and Yermolof went upon his travels. During the course of the year he had been loaded with riches, and on his departure he was furnished with 100,000 rubles and imperial recommendations to the Russian ambassadors at all the European courts. On the day after his departure, Momonof, another adjutant of Potemkin, occupied his place.

About this period Potemkin repeatedly travelled from Petersburg to Tauris and back with all the expedition of a courier, whilst he was engaged in the building of Kherson, in order to prepare a splendid triumph for the empress. The neglected Sahim Gherai hastened thither to meet him and make him acquainted with the urgency of his wants; but Potemkin, instead of rendering him any assistance, banished him to Kaluga, where he fell into a state of the deepest poverty. He then conceived that he might find some relief from his fellow-believers, and fled to Turkey, but the sultan caused him to be arrested as a traitor and renegade at Khotchim, to be conveyed to Rhodes, and there despatched by the bow-string (1787). The plan contemplated by Potemkin and the empress was to raise the grand-duke Constantine, second grandson of the empress, to the dignity of emperor of Byzantium, at the expense of the Turks, and at the same time to incorporate the kingdom of Poland with Russia. The new city of Kherson was no sooner ready for this grand theatrical representation, than the empress was to travel thither to receive the homage of her new subjects, and to deceive the world by an ostentatious display of magnificence and pomp. Joseph II. was invited to meet the empress in Kherson, in order to consult with her upon a partition of the Turkish empire; but Constantine himself was in the first instance left at home. The luxury and extravagance exhibited by Potemkin during the empress's journey, and the fêtes prepared for her reception and entertainment at Kherson, were worthy of the heaven-storming



characters of the pair. They remind us of the extravagance of the Abassides and the descendants of Timur, with this difference, that civilisation and the arts were strangers to the people of the khalifs and of the Great Mogul. Never perhaps was there seen in monarchical Europe, where such things are not rare, such a gross abuse of the wealth and well-being of the people, and such insult cast on public opinion by a contemptible comedy, as on the occasion of this imperial progress.

It began in January, 1787, and was continued night and day. To facilitate the journey by night, Potemkin had caused great piles of wood to be erected at every fifty perches, which were kindled at night-fall, and imparted to the whole district almost the brightness of day. On the sixth day the cortège reached Smolensk, and fourteen days afterwards Kief, where the degraded Polish magnates, who made a trade of their nation, their honour, and their friendship, were assembled to offer their homage to the empress and join in the revelry of her court. Potemkin himself had gone forward in advance in order to arrange the side-scenes of the theatre which he erected from Petersburg to Kherson. Deserts were peopled for the occasion ; and palaces were raised in the trackless wild. The nakedness of the plains was disguised by villages built for the purpose of a day, and enlivened by fire-works. Chains of mountains were illuminated. Fine roads were opened by the army. Howling wildernesses were transformed into blooming gardens ; and immense flocks and herds were driven to the sides of the road in order to delight the eyes of the empress in her hasty transit. The rocks in the Dniepr were sprung, that the empress might descend the stream as conveniently as she had travelled thither in the chamber of her sledge. At the beginning of May the whole party embarked on the river in fifteen splendid galleys at Kremenshuk, and on the following day Stanislaus of Poland presented himself at Kanief, in order, as it were, by his insipid and pitiful character to serve as a foil to the monarchial splendour of a woman. He accepted an alms of 100,000 rubles for the expenses of his journey, was very graciously received by Potemkin, treated with coldness and indifference by the empress, and as if his royal Polish income was simply a Russian pension, he begged for an augmentation. He was

not ashamed to acknowledge to all the courts whose ambassadors accompanied the empress, that he regarded his kingdom as a Russian province, for he besought the empress to grant the succession to his nephew, and to his nation the free navigation of the Dniepr. As is customary in such cases, there was no lack of promises; but none of his petitions were really granted, for it was impossible either to value or respect him, and in his situation he was incapable of inspiring fear.

The emperor Joseph, who had anticipated the arrival of his ally in Kherson, travelled to meet her as far as Kaidack, and returned with her. He soon perceived that she was shamefully deluded by the appearance of prosperity, civilisation, and population, and that as soon as she had passed through, all was again to become empty and deserted.\* Like the villages, flocks, and men by the wayside, the new buildings in which the distinguished travellers passed their nights, and the houses and shops in Kherson, all vanished again when they had served their temporary purpose. It will not be regarded as incredible that 7,000,000 of rubles were expended on the journey, when it is known that the throne itself, which was erected for the empress in what was called the admiralty at Kherson, cost 14,000. Catharine made a magnificent entry into the new city, passing under a triumphal arch, on which was inscribed in the Greek tongue, "THE WAY TO BYZANTIUM."

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### AUSTRO-RUSSIAN WAR WITH TURKEY—WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND SWEDEN—TREATY OF VARELA.

AFTER the meeting at Kherson the two imperial allies prepared to direct their forces against the whole extent of

\* Joseph was invited by Catharine to place the second stone of a town, of which she had herself, with great parade, laid the first. After the ceremony he said, "The empress of Russia and I have finished a very important business in a single day: she has laid the first stone of a city, and I have laid the last."

the Turkish frontier, from the Adriatic to the Black Sea. Care was taken, however, to furnish an excuse for the participation of Austria, by inciting the Turks to make the first attack; for only in such a case was Austria bound to furnish auxiliaries to the Russians. To this end Bulgakof, Catharine's ambassador at Constantinople, was ordered by every means to excite commotions among the Greeks, Bulgarians, Vallahians, and Slavonians, as well as in Egypt and in Asia Minor. The Turks, justly incensed at these intrigues, insisted upon a distinct declaration of their views on the part of the Russians; and when they received for answer only the usual diplomatic subterfuge, that the ambassador must wait for instructions from Petersburg, they immediately declared war, sent Bulgakof to the state-prison of the Seven Towers, and nothing but the threatening interference of the English minister could have prevented them from inflicting summary vengeance upon him, to show their righteous displeasure at the conduct of his government. Catharine and Joseph had now gained their wishes. The Turks were the first to declare war, and a pretence was thus afforded to the Russians to call upon the Austrians for that aid which they were bound by treaty to render in case of an attack on the part of the Turks.\*

Had Potemkin been as great a general as he was capable of devising magnificent plans and playing the Russian tyrant, great things would have been accomplished in 1787, for all

\* Catharine published a manifesto, in a style with which some recent productions of her grandson's pen have made us familiar. After a long enumeration of the pretended wrongs ascribed to the Porte, she added: "That, provoked by a conduct, in itself so offensive, she had, *very unwillingly*, been obliged to have recourse to arms, as the only means left her for the support of those rights which she had acquired at the price of so much blood; and to avenge her wounded dignity, suffering from the violence that had been used towards her minister at Constantinople; that, *entirely innocent* of all the calamities inevitably engendered by war, she relied with confidence, not only on the *Almighty protection* and the assistance of her allies, but on the prayers of the Christian world, for triumph in a cause so just as that which she was obliged to defend." This manifesto was soon followed up by a second, which declared: "That the Porte had arrogantly presumed to insist on a categorical answer to its absurd demands; and that the empress, forced to repel the aggression of the enemy of the Christian name, armed herself with confidence, *under the protection of that just God who had so long and so powerfully shielded the Russian empire.*"

the preparations for the war had been made long beforehand. Field-marshal Romantzof was to share the command of the army with Potemkin; that is to say, he was to do all the work, and the other was to engross all the merit. Romantzof declined this thankless office, and Potemkin stood alone at the head of the army; but he did not succeed in deceiving posterity, for no one has ever ascribed to him what was effected by the officers under his command,—by Repnin, Paul Potemkin, Suvarof, Kamenskoi, Galitzin, and Kutusof, all of whom became more or less renowned in the wars of the present century. Potemkin found in Suvarof precisely such an instrument as he needed; for to that general the will of the empress or her favourite was in all cases a law paramount to all moral obligations, or any feelings of humanity. He was sent to Kinburn, the chief object of the campaign being apparently the siege of Otchakof, by the main body under Potemkin, whilst other divisions were despatched to observe the movements of the Tatars in the Kuban. Kinburn was a small fortress occupied by the Russians, and situated upon a promontory directly opposite to Otchakof, in and around which the Turkish army was stationed. The object of Suvarof's mission was to frustrate the efforts of the Turkish fleet to land a division on the promontory of Kinburn; and he executed the task in a masterly manner. At first he remained perfectly quiet in the fortress, after having erected a battery at the extremity of the promontory, in order to cannonade the Turkish ships from the land, at the same moment in which they might be attacked by the Russian fleet. He allowed the Turks to proceed without molestation till they had disembarked from 6000 to 7000 men; he then sent a few regiments of Cossacks against them, and at the same time charged them at the head of two battalions of infantry with fixed bayonets, and exterminated them all. Immediately afterwards he employed his battery against the Turkish fleet. The prince of Nassau-Siegen, who had the command of the Russian gun-boats of Nicolaief, attacked the Turkish ships at the very entrance of what is called the Liman, and within range of Suvarof's guns, to whose well-directed fire he was indebted for a great share of the advantages which he gained.

The whole remaining part of the year 1787, as well as the



spring and a great part of the summer of 1788, elapsed without anything important having been undertaken; the whole of the Russian land-forces were, however, directed towards the Bog, in order to push forward with the greatest expedition to the Danube. The Turks had already suffered defeats at sea and in the Caucasus. The Russian fleet in the Black Sea, which was almost wholly commanded by foreigners, nearly annihilated the Turkish navy; generals Tallitzin and Tekely massacred the Tatars of the Kuban, and Tamara reduced Georgia and Lesghistan. In August, Potemkin at length marched against Otchakof, but very wisely left the whole conduct of the military operations to Suvarof, the victor of Kinburn. The Russian operations were delayed in expectation of an Austrian army, which, in connexion with a Russian force under Soltikof, was to make an incursion into Moldavia. This delay was protracted till king Gustavus began to exhibit symptoms of making an attack on the provinces contiguous to Sweden, which were now deprived of means of defence. He had to revenge on Russia a long series of wrongs, crowned by the intolerable conduct of Catharine's ambassador Razumofsky, whom she had sent to form conspiracies against him, and to persecute and insult him in his own capital.

Gustavus III. would also willingly have induced Denmark to take part in the movement against Russia; in this, however, he was unsuccessful, although supported by England and Prussia. Razumofsky, the Russian ambassador, was ordered to leave Stockholm on the 23rd of June, and went to the army in Finland. The king appeared as if he designed immediately to march against Petersburg, which excited no small concern in the minds of the government, because, in confident reliance on the king's misunderstanding with the Swedish nobles, the whole of their good troops had been despatched to the frontiers of Turkey.

The king of Sweden was acquainted with the feelings of his nobles, consequently with those of the generals and officers of his army; he therefore endeavoured to deprive the malcontents of the apparently legal point of a refusal to serve, by changing the offensive war which he contemplated into a defensive one, and for this purpose had recourse to a very childish subterfuge. There had been a long-existing dispute

between the two countries respecting the bridge over the small river Kymene, the boundary between the two states, whether it should be painted in Swedish or Russian colours; he provoked the Russians to maintain this disputed right by force of arms, and then proclaimed that he had been attacked by them, and was therefore justified in carrying on a defensive war without consulting the estates. We leave it undecided whether he took possession of the bridge by force, and thereby compelled the Russians to resist force by force; or whether, as the best accounts allege, he caused some Swedes to be clothed in Russian uniforms in order to attack his own soldiers, and in this way to justify an offensive war.

The distance from the river Kymene to Petersburg is less than 150 miles. There would have been no difficulty in storming the small fortresses of Vyborg and Friedrichshamm, which lay upon the route, and an unexpected attack from the sea might probably have led to the surprise and capture of Cronstadt and Cronslot, the former of which is less than twenty miles from the open waters, and the latter is situated on a sand-bank in the sea.\* The favourable moment, however, for an attack by sea had been already allowed to pass by the king's brother Charles, duke of Sudermania, who commanded the Swedish fleet; and by land, the king was precipitate when he ought to have delayed, and hesitated when everything depended on rapidity. On the 22nd of June duke Charles, with fifteen ships of the line and five frigates, had fallen in with three sail of Russian ships, to the north of the island of Gothland, which he ought to have captured, but was restrained by a feeling of reluctance to begin the war (which was then actually commenced), and immediately a superior

\* The Swedes were not aware of the fortuitous advantage then offered them by a singular incident. Just before the Russian admiral received orders to weigh, the empress had given the command of a ship to the famous Paul Jones. As soon as the British officers in the Russian service heard of this appointment, they repaired in a body to the Admiralty, and announced their determination to quit the squadron to which that pirate had been attached. By this act on their part seven or eight ships were left without officers, until the empress, smothering her resentment, withdrew Paul Jones from the squadron, under pretence of sending him to the Black Sea; but fearing a repetition of so unpleasant a scene, she contrived to get rid of the daring adventurer altogether.

Russian fleet appeared. Admiral Greig, an Englishman, who commanded it, was far superior to the Swedish grand-admiral and prince in talents, experience, and power of endurance; his fleet outnumbered the Swedish by two ships of the line and two frigates, and therefore the issue of the engagement between the two fleets which took place on the 17th of July was the less inglorious for the Swedes. They fell in with the Russians off the island of Hogland, and fought with great skill and courage; they lost, it is true, one of their line-of-battle ships, but took one of the Russian fleet in its stead; at length, however, they were compelled to seek for safety in the harbour of Sveaborg, where they were kept in a state of blockade by the Russians during the whole of the campaign.

The king made himself ridiculous as a mere quixotical braggart. The secretary of his embassy in Petersburg delivered such an extremely absurd ultimatum, that no other answer was given than an order from the commandant to take his departure from the capital. Gustavus enacted the paladin with great spirit, but proved himself wholly incapable in the field. With the army, as in Stockholm, he delighted to be a king and knight among the ladies, at balls, operas, and tournaments, and trifled away three precious weeks when a moment's delay might have frustrated all his plans. He commanded armaments to be prepared and a commissariat to be provided, but left the whole superintendence to others, who neglected everything, and instead of preparing means to oppose, entered into secret correspondence with the Russians. All this immediately appeared, when the king at length resolved to storm the fortress of Friedrichshamm. He found himself destitute of heavy artillery and other materials of war, which he supposed were all in readiness, and whilst the artillery was being slowly brought up by land, the nobles were devising the most shameful treason.

It was arranged that Friedrichshamm should be at once attacked both by sea and by land, and Siegeroth had actually landed his troops and commenced operations when he suddenly received counter orders, because the troops which were with the king refused obedience. In these circumstances, Gustavus had no other alternative than to return to Stockholm, in order there to recover his royal dignity and power which he had lost at Friedrichshamm. He entered Stockholm

in September, and thenceforth occupied himself in preparing a *coup d'état*, which he accomplished on the 17th of February in the following year. Meanwhile, his traitorous nobles had concluded a truce with Russia, which was so far advantageous to Gustavus, that it liberated his fleet from its captivity in the bay of Sveaborg. He was now dictator and autocrat; he had at command the means of prosecuting the war with Russia; but the favourable moment was past, and the Russians had already completed all their preparations by land and sea for the defence of their provinces bordering upon Sweden. Gustavus's project of burning the Russian fleet in the harbour of Copenhagen was totally unworthy of those chivalric feelings which he affected; it was discovered beforehand, and brought him nothing but disgrace. When he again joined the army in Finland, his Swedes gave evidence of their attachment and courage; but he himself again contrived to injure the success of the war by his absurd interference in its conduct. In the murderous fights which ensued from the middle of June till the end of July, both the Russians and Swedes lost great numbers of men, without any other gain on either side than military renown. The Swedes in the mean time were unfortunate at sea, and could not have profited by their success had they been victorious by land.

Admiral Ehrenswerd commanded the Swedish flotilla of flat-bottomed boats, constructed for navigating the rocky shallows of the coast, whilst the similar Russian fleet was under the orders of the prince of Nassau-Siegen, who had shortly before been commander of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, and had fallen into disputes with Potemkin, which led to his being sent to the Baltic. The Russian ships of the line were under the command of admiral Tchitchakof, and had on board a considerable number of British naval officers of experience. This fleet had on the 26th of June fallen in with that of the Swedes, which was so injured in an engagement between Bornholm and Gothland as to be obliged to return to Carlserona. The unfortunate issue of the battle was generally ascribed to disloyalty on the part of some of the noble naval officers. The king still persisted in his determination of opening up a way for himself to Petersburg, and therefore of storming Friedrichshamm. He him-



self directed the execution of the project, although he was, properly speaking, merely a volunteer with his army. By his interference he exposed the Swedish army to considerable loss, on the same day (24th August) on which the Russian flotilla gained an important victory over the Swedes at Rogensalm. Friedrichshamm, according to the king's command, was to be stormed by the three generals, Siegroth, Kaulbart, and Platen; the assault, however, failed of success, and the Swedes were obliged to retire; their flotilla was twice beaten. The first victory of the Russians at Rogensalm was attributed to the prince of Nassau-Siegen, who, however, was accompanied by three or four persons, who rendered him the same service which the British officers did to admiral Tchitchakof. On the 1st of September the Swedish flotilla experienced a defeat at Högfors, and the land army, commanded by the king, was there also compelled to retreat. The loss in human life was, indeed, great, but the real injury small, for the Swedish army continued till the beginning of winter to occupy its quarters on the frontiers of Russia.

During the winter, Gustavus withdrew from his army, but he resumed his duties as commander in March, 1790, and was now careful to supply all the deficiencies of the two previous years. On the 15th of April, in Finland, he reduced the two important posts of Kärnakosky and Pardakofsky near Vilmanstrand; his Swedes were victorious at Valkiala; and on the 30th repulsed the Russians in their attempt to recover the two posts just mentioned. On the 4th and 5th of May the Swedes were afterwards beaten at Aberfors by the Russian general Numsen, and lost twelve pieces of cannon. The king having again taken Pardakofsky, the key of Savolax, immediately caused a portion of his land forces to embark in the flotilla, of which he himself assumed the command, and ordered the remainder of the army to press forward by the shore towards Petersburg, relying on the assistance of the fleet, which was to receive them on board in case of a defeat. The fleet consisted of nineteen large ships, twenty-seven galleys, and a number of gun-boats, which in all mounted about 2000 guns. It was absolutely necessary to the execution of this adventurous undertaking, that Fried-

richshamm should in all haste be reduced by storm. The king having been successful on the 15th in a naval engagement, made his third attempt at storming the fortress on the 17th and 18th of May, and notwithstanding a great loss in men, failed in effecting his object. Although the way by land thus remained barred, he nevertheless persisted in his design of terrifying the empress in her capital.

Gustavus having now embarked a greater number of Swedish troops than before, reached Vyborg, and on the 2nd of June, 1790, disembarked a division of his army at Blörke, about forty miles from Petersburg. The whole success of this rash enterprise depended on his remaining master of the sea. In order to maintain this superiority, duke Charles was to prevent the junction of the two Russian fleets, one of which was lying in Cronstadt and the other in Revel, and on the 3rd of June he was ordered to engage the division of the fleet in the former harbour. The Swedish fleet was no sooner thus withdrawn from its position than an opportunity was afforded to the Russians to form a junction between their two fleets, which actually took place on the day the duke entered the sound of Vyborg (6th June). The Swedish fleet was blockaded by the Russian squadrons, consisting, when united, of thirty ships of the line and eighteen frigates; the former, however, continued to keep up its connexion with the flotilla. It appears that both the Swedish fleets would have been entirely lost, had the two Russian admirals been qualified for such a command. Captain Pelissier, who had served in Holland, is said to have given admiral Tchitchakof advice which he ought to have followed, had he not been too obstinately attached to his own opinions; Pelissier even pointed out to generals Suchtelen and Soltikof the places where they ought to have erected their batteries in order effectually to bar the egress of the Swedish fleet from the bay; no attention, however, was paid to his advice. The prince of Nassau-Siegen proved himself to be in no respect superior as a commander to Tchitchakof. On the other hand, if the advice of duke Charles had been adopted, the Russians would have been victorious without a battle; king Gustavus and Stedingk, however, rescued the honour of the Swedish name.

The Swedes had now been closely shut up in the bay of Vyborg for three weeks, and at the end of June were reduced to extremities; in the beginning of July a grand council of war was held. Duke Charles and many other members of the council recommended a capitulation, but the king and Stedingk were in favour of making a desperate effort to force their way through the enemy's line. The attempt was accordingly made on the 3rd of July, and through Tchitchakof's neglect it was so far successful, as it enabled the Swedish fleet to bring the blockading squadron to an engagement. But the Swedes lost in it not only seven ships of the line, three frigates, and more than thirty galleys and gun-boats, but almost the whole of the royal guards, the queen's regiment, and that of Upländ, amounting to 6000 or 7000 men, which had been put on board the fleet. Whilst the larger Swedish ships thus endeavoured to gain the open sea, the flotilla had withdrawn for safety into an arm of the gulf, which runs parallel to the shore and stretches towards Friedrichshamm. This inlet, called the Sound of Suenske, is extremely difficult of access on the side towards Friedrichshamm, in consequence of a group of rocky islands at its mouth, but it may be safely reached through the open harbour of Asph. By this way the prince of Nassau-Siegen determined to pass into the sound with the Russian flotilla, and attack the Swedes in their place of refuge.

The latter were well protected from the attack of the Russian fleet by rocks, and when the prince gave orders for the assault on the 9th, the sailors were so exhausted, and his orders for battle were so unskilful, that the king of Sweden gained a splendid victory on that and the following day. The loss of the Russians was so great as to have surpassed any which they had suffered since the seven years' war. Fifty-five vessels were captured, a number of others destroyed, and 14,000 Russians either taken prisoners or slain. In spite of this signal victory, the fickle king of Sweden had now awoke from his dream of humbling the pride and glory of Russia; already he began to cast his eyes towards France, and in the following year he dreamed his monarchical dream in favour of the French emigrants. The idea of becoming the Cucupeter or Godfrey of Bouillon of the aristocratic and monarchical crusade, which Burke at that time proclaimed

in the English parliament and in his work on the French revolution, had been awakened in his mind in 1790, and the empress of Russia found means of confirming him in his visionary projects. Moreover, his means were exhausted, and he therefore lent a favourable ear to the proposal of Galvez, the Spanish ambassador, who began to mediate for a peace between Sweden and Russia.

This peace, concluded at Varela on the Kymene on the 14th of August, 1790, served to show how empty all Gustavus's splendour was, and how unreal and inefficient were all the efforts he had made. It was now seen that all the blood had been shed to no purpose, and all the treasures of his very poor kingdom mischievously squandered, for everything remained on the footing on which it had been in the spring of 1788.

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## CHAPTER XLVI.

### AUSTRO-RUSSIAN WAR WITH TURKEY—TREATY OF YASSY.

WE now return to the war in which Austria and Russia were jointly engaged against Turkey. The whole Austrian army was ready to take the field at the end of the year 1787: it formed an immense cordon stretching from the mountains on the coast of the Adriatic Sea to the Carpathians, and consisted of a main body and five divisions. Unhappily, the emperor Joseph was desirous of commanding the main army in person, under the unskilful direction of Lacy, his military Mentor, who, like his pupil Mack, was a good drill-sergeant, but no general. The main body consisted of 25,000 infantry and 22,000 horse, and the whole of the troops together amounted to 86,000 cavalry and 245,000 foot, accompanied by 898 pieces of artillery.

In February, 1788, Russia and Austria had simultaneously declared war against the Turks; but in August of that year England and Prussia entered into an alliance, the main object of which was to place Prussia in a situation to prevent the aggrandisement of Austria, if necessary, by force of arms. This, however, was superfluous in 1788, because the



diversion effected by the king of Sweden prevented the Russians from proceeding with their usual rapidity, and the emperor Joseph by his presence with the army frustrated the effect of his immense armaments. The dissatisfaction with the whole conduct of the war became so general, that Joseph was at length obliged earnestly to entreat Laudon, who had been the popular hero of the Austrians since the time of the seven years' war, and whom the emperor had hitherto neither employed nor consulted, to assume the command of the army in Croatia.

Laudon, having made an express stipulation that the emperor was not to interfere with his plans, marched against the Turks, defeated them under the walls of Dubitza the very day after he joined the army, and reduced that fortress; then pushing into the heart of Bosnia, he compelled Novi to surrender, whilst the emperor himself was obliged to hasten to the aid of the army in the Bannat, which was very hard-pressed by the Turks. The division under Wartensleben, which should have supported it, had been driven back by the Turks, who succeeded, in consequence of an incomprehensible neglect on the part of the Austrians, in getting complete possession of the rocky bed through which the Danube has forced a passage at a distance of six-and-twenty miles above New Orsova. The pass, which is not more than a pistol-shot in width, is commanded by a fortified cleft in the rock, called Veterani's hole,\* and this post the Austrians should and could have maintained when the main body of the Turks appeared at Old Orsova on the 7th of August; this, however, they neglected to do. The Austrian general suffered himself to be defeated, and lost thirteen pieces of cannon, and as his communications with the main army were cut off, he was obliged to retreat so far that the garrison of this important post was left to its fate. The Turks sacrificed great numbers of men in order to seize this fastness, by the possession of which they immediately became masters of the whole navigation of the Danube as far down as Belgrade. As soon as the Danube was lost, the imperial army found itself threatened in the rear.

\* Field-marshal count Veterani, in the year 1692, with captain d'Arman, 300 men and five pieces of cannon, defended this passage for forty-five days against the whole Turkish army.

Nothing but disaster attended the operations of Joseph and Wartensleben. The army under the prince of Coburg was somewhat less unfortunate. Khotchim, which the Russians had captured in the last war without firing a shot, was reduced by it after a most heroic resistance of three months; and this was the last exploit of a campaign in which 30,000 Austrians fell in desultory skirmishes, and 40,000 were swept off by pestilence—losses but poorly compensated by the capture of Szabatch, Khotchim, Dubitza, and Novi. Circumstances, however, afterwards proved more favourable. Yassy was taken; in October, the Russians were in possession of five districts of Moldavia and of several passes in Vallachia, and the main army was again able to extend the limits of its operations. Wartensleben sat down with a part of the army before Mahadia; and the emperor kept possession of the country from Pantchova to Semlin.

After the massacre perpetrated by Suvarof upon the Turks on the promontory of Kinburn, the Russians had remained for a long time quiet; but by their possession of the coasts, they effectually prevented the Turks from landing any troops, and by the capture of the island of Beresan, wholly excluded them from the mouth of the Dniepr. It was not till late in the year 1788 that Potemkin summoned Suvarof from Kinburn to conduct the siege of Otchakof, where, however, he was wounded, and after his return to Kinburn the siege made very little progress. The avarice of Potemkin deprived the soldiers of the necessary supplies; and the dreadful cold and disease proved far more injurious to them than the attacks of their enemies. At length the frost became so intense that the men were obliged to excavate pits for dwellings, but the same frost also opened up a means of attacking the fortress and reducing it after the Russian fashion, that is, without regard to the sacrifice of thousands of men, a few weeks earlier than they could otherwise have done. The city is completely protected on the side towards the Black Sea by a marshy lake called Liman; and now that the lake was frozen, Potemkin issued orders to storm the fortress from the sea side, where it was weakest. The Russians were cruelly sacrificed: one regiment was no sooner mowed down than another was compelled to advance, and above four thousand men were slain before the storming of Otchakof was

effected (16th Dec.), an exploit which was afterwards extolled to heaven. The Russians having at length borne down all resistance and forced their way into the city, were compensated for their losses and sufferings during the siege by three days' murder and pillage; they put citizens and soldiers, men, women, and children to the sword without mercy or distinction. It is said that 20,000 Turks perished in this massacre; but this piece of Russian heroism, which was not performed by Potemkin himself, but by others at his command, was also rewarded after the Russian fashion. Every soldier who had taken part in the siege received a medal of honour, whilst Potemkin, who had contributed nothing to its success, derived the only real advantage. The empress had previously deprived Razumofsky of the office of hetman, which she now conferred upon Potemkin, who received in addition a present of 100,000 rubles, besides what he had appropriated to himself out of the moneys destined for the besieging army, and what he had seized out of the rich booty which fell into his hands after the capture of the city.

The death of the sultan Abd-el-Habed in April, 1789, made no change in the relations between the Turks and Russians. His successor, Selim, continued to prosecute the war, and Suvarof having recovered from the effects of his wound, again joined Potemkin's army, and was put at the head of the division which was to co-operate with the Austrians. Laudon had now the command of the whole Austrian army; the prince of Coburg, however, retained that of the division which was to keep open the communications with the Russians; and again he gave such numerous proofs of his incapacity to conduct any great undertakings, or even to help himself out of trifling difficulties, that the history of the campaign of 1789 alone ought to have prevented the emperor Leopold from entrusting him with the command against the French, who possessed generals and soldiers of a very different kind from those of the Turks. Selim III. had succeeded in getting on foot a very considerable force, which was destined to operate on the extreme point of Moldavia, where that country touches upon Transylvania, and is separated from Vallachia by a small river, which also divides the little town of Fokshani into two parts, one belonging to Moldavia, and the other to Vallachia. Coburg was

advancing thither slowly and methodically, when the Turkish army encamped in the neighbourhood of the town turned suddenly upon him, and filled him with such apprehensions of being completely shut in, that instead of boldly doing what Suvarof afterwards did, he anxiously besought that general's speedy assistance.

Suvarof's army was lying at Belat in Moldavia; when the news reached him he at once began a march of between forty and fifty miles in a direct line over mountains, across ravines and pathless wilds, and in less than thirty-six hours reached the Austrians on the 30th of July, at five o'clock in the evening. At eleven that night he sent the plan of the attack upon the Turks, which was to commence at two in the morning, to the astonished prince, who had never heard of such rapidity of movement, or seen it equalled even on parade. The bewildered prince went three times to Suvarof's quarters without having seen him: in the battle he made no claim to the supreme command, which should have belonged to him as the eldest general, but submitted as a subordinate to Suvarof's orders. The Turks, to the amount of between 50,000 and 60,000 men, were in position at Fokshani when the Russians and Austrians with 40,000 men passed the river Purna and stormed their fortified camp, mounting the ramparts, and driving them in at the point of the bayonet, as if they were assaulting ordinary field-works. The camp was taken in an hour, with the loss of about 800 men; the whole body of the Turkish infantry fell into disorder, their cavalry galloped off, were scattered in all directions, and pursued for some miles with the greatest impetuosity and vehement zeal. The whole of the baggage and artillery, all the stores collected in Fokshani, a hundred standards and seventy pieces of cannon, fell into the hands of the victors; the Austrians exhibited the same zeal, perseverance, and courage as the Russians, and had they possessed such a commander as Suvarof, they would have reaped immense fruits from the victory, but they became sensible, as early as August, that they were in want of a proper leader.

Suvarof returned to Moldavia; Coburg looked quietly on whilst the Turks were collecting a new army, and suffered the grand vizier to advance without obstruction in Vallachia. The Turks directed Hassan Pasha, who lay in Ismail, to make



an expedition against Repnin, whilst the grand vizier was to march against prince Coburg, who had taken up a position at Martinesti, on the river Rimnik. The news of this fresh attack no sooner reached the Austrian camp, than Coburg, instead of attempting to help himself, again had recourse to Suvarof, who had already drawn nearer to Coburg from Belat. The grand vizier's army, which had been estimated at 100,000 men, pushed forward rapidly by Braila (Ibrahim), and compelled the advanced posts of the prince to retire into their camp. Suvarof received the prince's letter on the 16th of September, immediately gave orders to march, and two days afterwards succeeded in forming a junction with the Austrians, at the very moment in which they were to have been attacked by the Turks.

The Austrians then proved anew that they were not to be surpassed when not commanded, as usual, by princes and privileged persons, who become generals whilst they sleep. Coburg, as he had previously done at Fokshani, totally relinquished the command at Martinesti to Suvarof, who immediately availed himself of the oversight of the Turks in not fortifying their camp before they offered battle, and attacked them by storm in their unfinished trenches. The issue was as glorious as it had been on the 31st of July at Fokshani; the contest, however, was more obstinately maintained. On this occasion the Russians formed the left wing, whilst the centre and right were occupied by the Austrians, whose admirably-served artillery scattered the Turkish cavalry, which had made an attempt to surround and cut off the small body of the Russians. The victory in this dangerous and hard-fought battle was gained not merely by the courage, activity, and bayonets of the Austrian and Russian infantry, but especially by the great military skill of the commander. His orders to avoid the village of Bochsá, and first to drive the Turks out of the woods by which they were covered before commencing the main attack, have been greatly admired, and above all his prudence in not sacrificing the infantry in a blind storm, which were the more remarkable in a general accustomed to bring everything to a rapid determination.

The victory was splendid, the booty immense, the Turkish army a second time utterly dispersed,—a necessary conse-

quence of the nature of its composition,— and the number of killed and wounded much greater than at Fokshani. Prince Coburg, on account of this victory, in which he was entitled to little share, was created a field-marshal; Suvarof received the dignity of a count of the empire from the emperor Joseph, and the empress of Russia for once gave an honourable surname to a man who had really earned it by his personal services; she raised him to a level with her Tchesmian Orlof and her Taurian Potemkin, and called him Rimniksky, from the name of the river on the banks of which he had been victorious.

The victory of Rimnik and the capture of Belgrade by Laudon on the 9th of October were the harbingers of greater success. Hassan Pasha, the Turkish high-admiral and celebrated conqueror of Egypt, whose confidence in his good fortune had encouraged him to assume the command of an army, was totally defeated at Tobac, in Bessarabia, by prince Potemkin, and his discomfiture was followed by the surrender of Bender, Akerman, Kilia Nova, and Isatza, and by the investment of Ismail. At the same time the prince of Coburg took Bucharest and Hohenlohe, forcing the passes which lead into Vallachia, made himself master of Rimnik and Crajova. Laudon also reduced Semendria and Cladova, and blockaded Orsova, which, being situated in an island of the Danube, was inaccessible to regular attacks. By these conquests the allies became masters of the whole line of fortresses which covered the Turkish frontier; the three grand armies, originally separated by a vast extent of country, were rapidly converging to the same point, and threatened, by their united force, to overbear all opposition, and in another campaign to complete the subversion of the Ottoman empire in Europe.

But in the midst of this successful career, the increasing ferment in the hereditary states of Austria, the rebellion in the Netherlands, and, still more, the interposition of the maritime powers and Prussia, checked the hopes of Joseph at the very moment when his projects of aggrandisement seemed hastening to their completion. Justly alarmed at the successes of the two imperial courts, the three combined powers incited Poland to throw off the yoke of Russia, delivered the king of Sweden from Danish invasion, and laid

the foundation of a general alliance for reducing the overgrown power of Austria and Russia. The king of Prussia even encouraged the rising discontents in Hungary, fomented the troubles which the impolitic innovations of Joseph had excited in the Netherlands, and, in the beginning of 1790, opened a negotiation with the Porte for the conclusion of an offensive alliance, intended not only to effect the restoration of the dominions conquered during the existing war, but even of the Crimea, and the territories dismembered by the two imperial courts from Poland.

The only power to which Joseph might have turned as a counterpoise to this combination was France, from whose recent change of system he had flattered himself with hopes of a cordial support, and from which he had even received private largesses to a considerable amount. But now France was in the throes of her great revolution, and Joseph was left without a resource. Worn down by innumerable calamities and disease, he died in February, 1790; and his successor, Leopold, was fortunate enough to conclude a separate peace with the Porte.

Russia continued to prosecute the war against the Turks without the aid of Austria. Ismail still held out, and Potemkin, who had been besieging it for seven months, began to grow impatient. Living in his camp like one of those satraps whom he even surpassed in luxury, he was surrounded by a crowd of courtiers and ladies, who exerted every effort to amuse him. One of these ladies, pretending to read the decrees of fate in the arrangement of a pack of cards, predicted that he would take the town at the end of three weeks. Potemkin answered, with a smile, that he had a method of divination far more infallible. He instantly sent orders to Suvarof to come from Galatz and take Ismail in three days. Suvarof arrived and took such measures as would seem to indicate that he designed a renewal of the regular siege; he drew together the scattered divisions of the troops, formed them into a large besieging army of about 40,000 men, and ordered the small Russian fleet to come into the neighbourhood of the city; but his real design was to follow the course he had successfully pursued before Otchakof, take advantage of the frost, and reduce the fortress by storm. Had not Ismail, according to ancient usage, been built without advanced

works, a general even like Suvarof would scarcely have ventured on such an attack, which in the actual condition of the defences was attended by such murderous consequences. On the 21st of September the city was twice summoned, and on both occasions the garrison and inhabitants were threatened with the fate of Otchakof. The Turks, however, did not suffer themselves to be terrified into submission, and the fearful storm was commenced on the 22nd, at four o'clock in the morning. The wall was not mounted till eight o'clock, after an unexampled slaughter; but still the hottest part of the struggle took place in the city itself. Every street was converted into a fortress, every house became a redoubt, and it was twelve o'clock before the Russians, advancing through scenes of carnage and desperate resistance, reached the market-place, where the Tatars of the Crimea were collected. The Tatars fought for two hours with all the energy of despair, and after they had been all cut to pieces the struggle was still carried on by the Turks in the streets. Suvarof at length opened a passage for his cavalry through the gates into the devoted city; they charged through the streets, and continued to cut down and massacre the people till four o'clock in the afternoon. At the conclusion of this dreadful butchery the Russians received the reward which had been promised them when they were led to the storm and to certain death, —the city was given up for three days to the mercy of the victorious troops.\*

Suvarof himself, in his official report of this murderous enterprise, states, that in the course of four days 33,000 Turks were either slain or mortally wounded, and 10,000 taken prisoners. He rates the loss of the Russians at 2000 killed and 2500 wounded: a number which seems to us as improbably small as the usual accounts, which assign 15,000 as the Russian loss, seem exaggerated. There were two French emigrants present at this storm, one of whom afterwards became celebrated as a Russian governor-general and French minister, and the other as a Russian general in the war against his countrymen. The first was the duke de

\* Catharine, elated with Suvarof's victories, said to Sir Charles Whitworth, the English ambassador, "Sir, since the king your master is determined to drive me out of Petersburg, I hope he will permit me to retire to Constantinople."



Richelieu, or as he was then called de Fronsac, and the second the count de Langeron. Kutusof also served in this affair under Suvarof, and led the sixth line of attack.

About this time the whole diplomacy and aristocracy of Europe were busily employed in endeavouring to rescue the Turks, in order to check the dangerously rapid progress of the French and Polish revolutionists. There speedily grew up such a general desire as the English wished to promote—of two evils to choose the least—to secure and uphold the empire of the Turks and to let the nationality of Poland perish. Russia, however, declined the proffered mediation of England in the war with the Turks, as she had resolved for this time to give up her conquests in Turkey in order to indemnify herself in Poland: she accepted merely the intervention of the friendly Danes.

Potemkin and the empress were not unthankful for Suvarof's servility, since he threw himself and all his services at their feet, and ascribed everything to them alone. Repnin, whom Potemkin left at the head of the army when he went to Petersburg in October, 1790, pursued a very different course, doing more in two months than Potemkin had done in three years. He crossed the Danube with his army, pushed forward into Bulgaria, and caused the whole Turkish army to be attacked and beaten near Babadagh by Kutusof, after Gudovitch, the brother of him who had been the faithful aide-de-camp of Peter III., had completely put down the Tatars in the Kuban in January, 1791. At the head of 40,000 Russians, Repnin then advanced against 100,000 Turks, under the command of the same vizier, Yussuf, who had fought with such success against the emperor Joseph in the Bannat. Potemkin, eager to appropriate the impending victory, flew with the rapidity of lightning from Petersburg when both armies were ready for battle (July, 1791). He took it for granted that Repnin would certainly await his arrival at the army; but he did no such thing. He offered battle before the arrival of Potemkin, whose custom it was to enjoy the fruits in the gathering of which he had no share. The victory which Repnin gained over the great Turkish army in July at Matchin led to a violent altercation between him and Potemkin,\* who came too late to have any partici-

\* His interview with Repnin was an amusing scene. "You little

pation in the honours of the day; Repnin, however, still remained in command of the army. Potemkin afterwards did everything in his power to prevent the peace for which Repnin was to negotiate, although he clearly saw that the course of events required the Russians to give up this wholesale conquest of Turkish provinces. Happily, his death left Repnin's hands free, and a treaty was concluded at Yassy on the 9th of January, 1792, between Russia and the Porte, by which the former acquired nothing more than the fortress of Otechakof, the surrounding territory from the Dniestr to the Bog, and the protectorate of Georgia.

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

DEATH OF POTEMKIN—HIS CHARACTER—MOMONOF—PLATO ZUBOF—A GLIMPSE OF CATHARINE'S PRIVATE LIFE—EFFECT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION ON CATHARINE'S MIND—FINAL PARTITION OF POLAND—ANNEXATION OF COURLAND.

NOT long after Potemkin's arrival at Yassy, where his head-quarters, or to speak more properly, his capital and his court were established, he was seized with a malignant fever, and presumed to treat it with the same haughty contempt with which he had long been used to treat his fellow-men: he laughed at his physicians, and ate salt meat and raw turnips. His disease growing worse, he desired to be conveyed to Otechakof, his beloved conquest, but had not travelled more than a few miles before the air of his carriage seemed to stifle him. His cloak was spread by the road-side; he was laid on it, and there expired in the arms of his favourite niece Branicka. Catharine fainted three times when she heard of his death: it was necessary to bleed her: she was thought

martinist priest," said he (Repnin was a zealous martinist), "how durst you undertake so many things in my absence? Who gave you any such orders?" Repnin, enraged at this speech, and emboldened by success, dared for once to behave with firmness: "I have served my country," he answered; "my head is not at your disposal, and you are a devil whom I defy." Saying this he went out of the room in a rage, slamming the door on Potemkin, who rushed after him with his fist clenched. The two heroes of Russia were within an ace of having a boxing-match with each other.

to be dying. She expressed almost as much grief as at the death of Lanskoy; but it was not the lover she regretted; it was the friend whose genius assimilated with her own, whom she considered as the support of her throne, and the executor of her vast projects. Catharine holding her usurped sceptre, was a woman and timid: she was accustomed to behold in Potemkin a protector whose fortune and glory were intimately connected with her own. She appeared to feel herself again a stranger: she began to fear her son, and took for her support her grandson Alexander, who was just emerging from boyhood, with intent to oppose him to his father.

What a contrast, what a lesson, does the death of the three greatest personages in Russia offer! Gregory Orlof, who reigned twelve years by the side of Catharine, died in a wretched state of insanity. The mighty and magnificent Potemkin, the founder of so many palaces and cities, the conqueror of a kingdom, expired on the road-side; Catharine herself fell down in her water-closet in a fit, and expired with a lamentable shriek.

The character of this Russian vizier has been thus sketched by count Ségur, who, as ambassador to St. Petersburg, lived long in habits of intimacy with him:

"Prince Gregory Alexandrovitch Potemkin was one of the most extraordinary men of his times; but in order to have played so conspicuous a part, he must have been born in Russia, and have lived in the reign of Catharine II. In any other country, in any other times, with any other sovereign, he would have been misplaced; and it was a singular stroke of chance that created this man for the period that tallied with him, and brought together and combined all the circumstances with which he could tally.

"In his person were collected the most opposite defects and advantages of every kind. He was avaricious and ostentatious, despotic and popular, inflexible and beneficent, haughty and obliging, politic and confiding, licentious and superstitious, bold and timid, ambitious and indiscreet. Lavish of his bounties to his relations, his mistresses, and his favourites, yet frequently paying neither his household nor his creditors.\* His consequence always depended on a

\* When a creditor presented himself with his bill, Potemkin would say to his secretary, "Why don't you pay this man?" giving him at

woman, and he was always unfaithful to her. Nothing could equal the activity of his mind, or the indolence of his body. No dangers could appal his courage; no difficulties force him to abandon his projects. But the success of an enterprise always brought with it disgust.

“He wearied the empire by the number of his posts and the extent of his power. He was himself fatigued with the burden of his existence; envious of all that he did not do, and sick of all that he did. Rest was not grateful to him, nor occupation pleasing. Everything with him was desultory; business, pleasure, temper, carriage. In every company he had an embarrassed air, and his presence was a restraint on every company. He was morose to all that stood in awe of him, and caressed all such as accosted him with familiarity.

“Ever promising, seldom keeping his word, and never forgetting anything, none had read less than he; few people were better informed. He had talked with the skilful in all professions, in all the sciences, in every art. None better knew how to draw forth and appropriate to himself the knowledge of others. In conversation he would have astonished a scholar, an artist, an artisan, or a divine. His information was not deep, but it was very extensive. He never dived into a subject, but he spoke well on all subjects.

“The inequality of his temper was productive of an inconceivable oddity in his desires, his conduct, and his manner of life. One while he formed the project of becoming duke of Courland; at another he thought of bestowing on himself the crown of Poland. He frequently gave intimations of an intention to make himself a bishop or even a simple monk. He built a superb palace, and wanted to sell it before it was finished. One day he would dream of nothing but war; and only officers, Tatars, and Cossacks were admitted to him: the next day he was busied only with politics; he would partition the Ottoman empire, and put in agitation all the cabinets of Europe. At other times, with nothing in his head but the court, dressed in a magnificent suit, covered with ribbons presented to him by every potentate, displaying diamonds of

the same time a secret sign in what way payment was to be made. If Potemkin closed his hand, the secretary gave the man money; if he opened it, the poor fellow was sent to Siberia.



extraordinary magnitude and brilliance, he was giving superb entertainments without any cause.

“He was sometimes known for a month, and in the face of all the town, to pass whole evenings at the apartments of a young woman, seeming to have alike forgotten all business and all decorum. Sometimes also, for several weeks successively, shut up in his room with his nieces and several men whom he honoured with his intimacy, he would lounge on a sofa, without speaking, playing at chess, or at cards, with his legs bare, his shirt collar unbuttoned, in a morning gown, with a thoughtful front, his eyebrows knit, and presenting to the view of strangers, who came to see him, the figure of a rough and squalid Cossack.

“These singularities often put the empress out of humour, but rendered him more interesting to her. In his youth he had pleased her by the ardour of his passion, his valour, and his masculine beauty. Being arrived at maturity, he charmed her still by flattering her pride, calming her apprehensions, confirming her power, and caressing her fancies of Oriental empire, the expulsion of the barbarians, and the restoration of the Grecian republics. . . . .

“Potemkin began everything, completed nothing, disordered the finances, disorganised the army, depopulated his country, and enriched it with other deserts. The fame of the empress was increased by his conquests. The admiration they excited was for her; and the hatred they raised, for her minister. Posterity, more equitable, will perhaps divide between them both the glory of the successes and the severity of the reproaches. It will not bestow on Potemkin the title of a great man; but it will mention him as an extraordinary person; and, to draw his picture with accuracy, he might be represented as the real emblem, as the living image of the Russian empire.

“For, in fact, he was colossal like Russia. In his mind, as in that country, were cultivated districts and desert plains. It also partook of the Asiatic, the European, the Tatar, and the Cossack; the rudeness of the eleventh century, and the corruption of the eighteenth; the surface of the arts, and the ignorance of the cloisters; an outside of civilisation, and many traces of barbarism. In a word, if we might hazard so bold a metaphor, even his two eyes, the one

open and the other closed, reminded us of the Euxine always open, and the northern ocean, so long shut up with ice.

"This portrait may appear gigantic; but those who knew Potemkin will bear witness to its truth. That man had great defects; but without them, perhaps, he would neither have got the mastery of his sovereign, nor of his country. He was made by chance precisely such as he ought to be for preserving so long his power over so extraordinary a woman."

Potemkin, says Masson, "created, destroyed, or confused, yet animated everything. When absent, he alone was the subject of conversation; when present, he engaged every eye. The nobles, who detested him, and who made some figure when he was with the army, seemed at his sight to sink into nothingness, and to be annihilated before him. He received the greatest men of the empire as if they were footmen, scarcely deigned to notice the grand-duke, and sometimes entered Catharine's apartments with his legs bare, his hair about his ears, and in a morning gown. I leave to travellers the office of describing the pomp of his entertainments, the laborious luxury of his house, and the value of his diamonds; and to German scribblers to relate how many bank-notes he had bound up as books in his library, and what he paid for the cherries, a plate of which he was accustomed to present every new year's day to his august sovereign; or the cost of his sturgeon soup, which was his favourite dish; or how many hundred miles he would send a field-officer for a melon, or a nose-gay, to present to one of his mistresses."\*

Plato† Zubof, the twelfth and last of Catharine's avowed favourites, succeeded in some degree to the position which Potemkin had held as a sort of vice-emperor. Zubof had

\* Potemkin had in his suite an officer of high rank, named Bauer, whom he sent sometimes to Paris for a dancer, then to Astrakhan for a water-melon; now to Poland, to carry orders to his tenants; to Petersburg, to carry news to Catharine; or to the Crimea, to gather grapes. This officer, who thus spent his life travelling post, requested an epitaph to be ready for him in case he should break his neck, and one of his friends gave him the following:

Cy git Bauer sous ce rocher: "Here Bauer lies, beneath this stone:  
Fouette, cocher! Coachman, drive on!"

† This name led the courtiers to say that Catharine ended with Platonic love.

superseded Momonof, who soon wearying of the faded charms of a mistress of sixty, became enamoured of the young princess Sherbatof, and had the courage to avow it and ask permission to marry her. Catharine had pride and generosity enough to grant his request without any reproaches. She saw him married at court to the object of his affection, and sent him to Moscow loaded with presents. But it was currently reported that Momonof was so imprudent as to mention to his wife some particulars of his interviews with the empress, and that she divulged them with a levity which Catharine could not forgive. One night, when the husband and wife were gone to rest, the master of the police at Moscow entered their chamber; and after showing them an order from her majesty, left them in the hands of six women, and retired to an adjoining room. Then the six women, or rather the six men dressed as women, seized the babbling lady, and having completely stripped her, flogged her with rods in the presence of Momonof, whom they forced to kneel down during the ceremony. When the chastisement was over, the police-master re-entered the room and said: "This is the way the empress punishes a first indiscretion. For the second, people are sent to Siberia."

It was in the spring of 1789, when the empress was at Tzarskoeselo, that Momonof was married and dismissed. Lieutenant Zubof commanded the detachment of horse-guards in attendance, and being the only young officer in sight, he owed his preferment to that fortunate circumstance. Nicholas Soltikof, to whom he was distantly related, and who was at that time in high credit, took pains to promote his interest, hoping to find in him a protector against Potemkin, whom he heartily disliked. After some secret conferences in presence of the Mentor,\* Zubof was approved, and sent for more ample information to Mdlle. Protasof and the empress's physician.† The account they gave must have been favourable, for he was named aide-de-camp to the empress, received a present of a hundred thousand rubles (10,000*l.*) to furnish him with linen, and was installed in the apartment of the favourites with all the customary advantages. The

\* Soltikof was governor to the grand-dukes, and minister at war.

† Mdlle. Protasof was called *l'éprouveuse*, from her functions. The physician to the empress was Mr. Rogerson.

next day, this young man was seen familiarly offering his arm to his sovereign, equipped in his new uniform, with a large hat and feather on his head, attended by his patron and the great men of the empire, who walked behind him with their hats off, though the day before he had danced attendance in their ante-chambers. His own were now filled with aged generals, and ministers of long service, all of whom bent the knee before him. He was a genius discerned by the piercing eye of Catharine; the treasures of the empire were lavished on him, and the conduct of the empress was sanctioned by the meanness and the shameful assiduities of her courtiers.\*

The new favourite was not quite five-and-twenty years old, the empress was upwards of sixty. Yet even at this advanced period of her life she revived the orgies and lupercalia which she had formerly celebrated with the brothers Orlof. Valerian, a younger brother of Zubof, and Peter Soltikof, their friend, were associated in office with the favourite. With these three young libertines did the aged Catharine spend her days, while her armies were slaughtering the Turks, fighting with the Swedes, and ravaging Poland; while her people were groaning in wretchedness and famine, and devoured by extortioners and tyrants.

It was at this time she formed a more intimate society, composed of her favourites and most trusty ladies and courtiers. This society met two or three times a week, under the name of the *Little Hermitage*. The parties were frequently masqued, and the greatest privacy prevailed. They danced, played at forfeits, joked, romped, and engaged in all sorts of frolics and gambols. Leof Narishkin acted the same part there as Roquelaure at the court of Louis XIV.; and a fool by title, Matrona Danilofna, seconded him. This was an old gossip, whose wit consisted only in uttering the most absurd vulgarities; and as she was allowed the common right of fools, that of saying anything, she was loaded with presents by the lower order of courtiers. Such foreign ministers as enjoyed the favour of the empress

\* Zubof being one day hunting, stopped with his suite in the road from Petersburg to Tzarskoeselo. The courtiers who were going to court, the couriers, the post, all the carriages and all the peasants were stopped: no one dared pass till the young man thought proper to quit the road; and he stayed in it more than an hour waiting for his game.



were sometimes admitted to the Little Hermitage. Ségur, Cobenzl, Steding, and Nassau, chiefly enjoyed this distinction; but Catharine afterwards formed another assembly, more confined and more mysterious, which was called the *Little Society*. The three favourites of whom we have just been speaking, Branicka, Protasof, and some confidential women and *valets-de-chambre*, were its only members. In this the Cybele of the north celebrated her most secret mysteries. The particulars of these amusements are not fit to be repeated.

Catharine survived Potemkin but four years. The last ten years of her reign carried her power, her glory, and her political crimes to their highest pitch. When the great Frederic, dictator of the kings of Europe, died, she remained the eldest of the crowned heads of the continent; and if we except Joseph, all those heads together were unequal to her own. If Frederic was the dictator of these kings, Catharine became their tyrant. The immense empire which she had subjected to her sway; the inexhaustible resources she derived from a country and a people as yet in a state of infancy; the extreme luxury of her court, the barbarous pomp of her nobility, the wealth and princely grandeur of her favourites, the glorious exploits of her armies, and the gigantic views of her ambition, threw Europe into a sort of fascination; and those monarchs, who had been too proud to pay each other even the slightest deference, felt no abasement in making a lady the arbiter of their interests, the ruling power of all their measures.

But the French revolution, so unfriendly to sovereigns in general, was particularly so to Catharine. The blaze which suddenly emerged from the bosom of France as from the crater of a volcano, poured its vivid light upon Russia too; and injustice, crimes, and blood were seen where before all was grandeur, glory, and virtue. Catharine trembled with fear and indignation. The French, those sweet heralds of her fame, those flattering and brilliant historians, who were one day to transmit to posterity the wonders of her reign, were suddenly transformed into so many inexorable judges, at whose aspect she shuddered. The phantoms of her imagination were dispelled. That empire of Greece she was so desirous of reviving, those laws she would have established,

that philosophy she intended to inculcate, and those arts which she had patronised, became odious in her sight. As a crowned philosopher, she valued the sciences so far only as they appeared the instruments for disseminating her glory. She wished to hold them as a dark lantern in her hand; to make use of their light as should suit her convenience; to see without being seen; but when they dazzled her all at once with their bright emanations, she wished to extinguish them. She, who had been the friend and disciple of the French speculative writers,\* now wished to be re-enveloped in the ages of barbarism; but her wishes were vain; the light was not to be resisted; if she composed herself to sleep on laurels, she awoke on the carcases of the dead; glory, which in illusion she embraced, was changed in her arms into one of the furies; and the legislatrix of the north, forgetting her own maxims and philosophy, was no longer anything more than an old sybil. Her dastardly favourites, everywhere pointing out to her in this event Brutuses, Jacobins, and incendiaries, succeeded in filling up the measure of her suspicions and terrors. Her delirium was even carried so far, that on a king, who extended his prerogatives, and a nobility that amended its government, she bestowed the appellations of rebels and traitors: the Poles were treated as Jacobins, because they had not the misfortune to be Russians.†

Had Catharine been asked, when her mind was calm, if she had not herself considerably advanced and helped to strengthen this revolution, what would she have answered? Yet such is the fact: since, if she had not been so eager to

\* Upon the breaking out of the revolution, Catharine ordered the bust of Voltaire to be taken from the gallery, and thrown among the lumber. She had requested a bust of Fox at the period when, at the head of the British opposition, he prevented by his exertions the government of his country from declaring war against Russia. When this same Fox, however, opposed with equal strenuousness a war with France, his bust also, which a year before she had so highly honoured, was served in the same manner as Voltaire's.

† The Americans even, at this epoch, became hateful to Catharine. She condemned a revolution which she had formerly pretended to admire, called Washington a rebel, and said publicly, that a man of honour could not wear the order of Cincinnati. Accordingly Langeron, and some other emigrants, who had been invested with this order, immediately renounced it, and were seen in it no longer.

seize upon the unfortunate country of the Poles, and afterwards to raise dissensions in Prussia and Sweden, she would not have disgusted, as she did, all Europe and the combination of princes; the king of Prussia would not have been induced so speedily to make peace with republican France, that he might be at leisure to watch her proceedings; nor would she have excited the indignation of Spain by employing against a Catholic king and a Catholic nobility the same arms and the same insults as were employed against the French. In this view France may erect a statue to her memory; for she made the system of the enemies of that country odious and absurd; and rendered the republic the same service as demagogues by their enormities, and ministers by their intrigues.

When the news of the death of Louis XVI. reached Catharine, she forthwith ordered all the French in Russia to take the oath of allegiance to Louis XVII. and to their holy religion, and swear hatred and detestation to the principles professed in France. From the lists printed by order of government, it appeared that there were seven or eight hundred Frenchmen in Petersburg, and more in Moscow; all of whom found themselves compelled to comply with this injunction. A few only, who had been for some time preparing to return to France, where their property was, chose rather to depart within the space of a week, as the ukase enjoined in case of refusal.\* But notwithstanding the intense abhorrence which Catharine professed for revolutionary France, she took no direct part in the first coalition which was formed against it. She had another object in view, of more pressing interest to her than the vindication of the cause of her order.

\* This ukase was as absurdly composed as it was inconsistently executed. Not only the French were obliged to take the oath, but almost all foreigners who spoke French, or who had their passports written in that language; so that Brabanters, Piedmontese, Milanese, and natives of Liege, were obliged to do homage to the king of France. It seemed as if the Russian police had foreseen the grand reunion that was soon to take place, and wished to sanction it beforehand. Some natives of the thirteen cantons, Montbelliard, Neufchatel, and Wirtemberg, found themselves under the same compulsion. The grand-duke Paul exacted the oath from all foreigners in his suite indiscriminately; and several officiously anticipated his wishes and commands.

The annihilation of Poland, long meditated, was now resolved on. The empress could never forgive that nation either for the act of the diet in 1788, which abrogated the constitution dictated by violence in 1775, or the alliance of Prussia accepted in contempt of her own, or, above all, the constitution decreed at Warsaw on the 3rd of May, 1791. Big with these ideas of revenge, she gave orders to Bulgakof, her minister at Warsaw, to declare war against Poland.

The diet being assembled, received this declaration with a majestic calmness, which was rapidly succeeded by the generous enthusiasm of a nation roused to self-defence. The king himself pretended to share the feelings that animated his people; and the Poles had the weakness to believe that, having abandoned his former servility to Russia, and his customary indolence, he was becoming the defender of their freedom. An army was collected in haste, and the command of it given to the king's nephew, Joseph Poniatowski, an inexperienced young man, all whose efforts were obstructed or misdirected by his traitorous uncle.

The Poles could have opposed the designs of Catharine with an army of 50,000 men: but they never yet could be brought to unite their forces; and their different corps were soon after pressed between an army of 80,000 Russians, who fell back from Bessarabia upon the territory which extends along the Bog, another of 10,000 collected in the environs of Kief, and a third of 30,000, which had penetrated into Lithuania.

We shall not here attempt to draw the picture of the various battles that drenched the plains of Poland with blood, and which, notwithstanding some advantages obtained by the Poles, consumed the greater part of their troops. It was then that the illustrious Kosciusko, who as yet was nothing more than one of the lieutenants of young Joseph Poniatowski, displayed qualities that justly obtained him the confidence of the nation, the hatred of the Russians, and the esteem of Europe.

During all this time, Catharine, not trusting alone to the power of her own arms, had been negotiating with unremitting assiduity. She proposed the definitive partition of Poland to Frederic William, who was undoubtedly no less desirous of it than herself. She secretly won over to her



views the two brothers Kassakoffsky, the hetman Branicki, Rejevusky, and particularly Felix Potocki,\* who, while flattering himself perhaps with the hopes of mounting the throne of Poland, became only the slave of Russia. She even insisted that Stanislaus Augustus should make a public declaration that it was necessary to yield to the superiority of the Russian arms. He submitted to this indignity; but was not on that account treated by the empress with greater indulgence.

In 1793 the confederation of the partisans of Russia assembled at Grodno, where the Russian general proudly seated himself under the canopy of the throne he was about to overturn. The Russian minister Sievers, at the same time, published a manifesto (April 9th), in which he declared that his sovereign would incorporate with her domains all the territory of Poland which her arms had conquered. The king of Prussia, in concert with Catharine, had already marched an army into Poland.

The Russians, dispersed about the provinces of that kingdom, committed depredations and ravages of which history furnishes but few examples. Warsaw became likewise the theatre of their excesses. The Russian general Igelström, who governed that city, connived at the disorders of his soldiers, and made the wretched inhabitants feel the whole weight of his arrogance and barbarity. The defenders of Poland had been obliged to disperse.† Their property was confiscated; their families reduced to servitude. Goaded by so many calamities, they once more took the resolution to free their country from the oppression of the Russians. Some of them assembled, and sent an invitation to Kosciusko to come and put himself at their head.

That general had retired to Leipsic, with Hugh Kolonty, Zajonchek, and Ignatius Potocki, a man of great knowledge and sagacity, a sincere friend to his country, and in all respects the opposite to his cousin Felix. These four Poles joined eagerly in the resolution adopted by their honest countrymen: but they were sensible that, in order to suc-

\* He put himself at the head of the confederation of Targovicka in favour of the Russians.

† Some of them were even arrested; and Bonneau, the French secretary of legation, was carried off to Siberia.

ceed, they must begin by giving liberty to the peasants, who till then had been treated in Poland like beasts of burden.

Kosciusko and Zajonchek repaired, with all expedition, to the frontiers of Poland. The latter proceeded to Warsaw, where he had conferences with the chiefs of the conspirators. A banker, named Kapustas, a bold and artful man, made himself responsible for the inhabitants of the capital. He saw likewise several officers, who declared their detestation of the Russian yoke. All, in short, was ripe for an insurrection, when the Russian commanders, to whom Kosciusko's presence on the frontiers had given umbrage, forced him to postpone it for a time. To throw the Russians off their guard, Kosciusko went into Italy, and Zajonchek to Dresden, whither Ignatius Potocki and Kolonty had retired, but all at once Zajonchek appeared again at Warsaw. The king himself impeached him to the Russian general Igelström, who had a conference with him, and ordered him to quit the Polish territory. No alternative now remained for him but to proceed immediately to action, or to abandon the enterprise altogether. Zajonchek resolved on the former.

In 1794 Kosciusko was recalled from Italy, and arrived at Cracow, where the Poles received him as their deliverer. In spite of the orders of the Russians, colonel Madalinsky pertinaciously refused to disband his regiment. Some other officers had joined him. Kosciusko was proclaimed general of this little army, amounting to 3000 foot and 1200 horse; and the act of insurrection was almost immediately published on the 24th of March. Three hundred peasants, armed with scythes, ranged themselves under the standard of Kosciusko. That general soon found himself faced by 7000 Russians, who were put to flight after a vigorous resistance.

On hearing at Warsaw of the success of Kosciusko, the Russian general Igelström caused all those to be arrested whom he suspected to have any concern in the insurrection; but these measures served only the more to irritate the conspirators. The insurrection broke out on the 18th of April. Two thousand Russians were put to the sword. Their general, being besieged in his house, requested permission to capitulate; and profiting by the delay that was granted him, he escaped to the Prussian camp, which lay at a little distance from Warsaw. Vilna, the capital of Lithuania, fol-

lowed the example of Warsaw: but the triumph of the insurgents was there less terrible. Colonel Yazinsky, who was at their head, conducted himself with so much skill, that he took all the Russians prisoners, without shedding a drop of blood. The inhabitants of the cantons of Chelm and of Lublin declared themselves also in a state of insurrection, and were imitated by three Polish regiments who were employed in the service of the Russians.

Some of the principal partisans of Russia, the hetman Kassakoffsky, the bishop his brother, Zabiello, Ozarofsky, and Ankvitch, were sentenced to be hanged, the first at Vilna, and the others at Warsaw.

Kosciusko exerted himself to the utmost to augment his army. He got recruits among the peasants; and to inspire them with more emulation, he wore their dress, ate with them, and distributed encouragements among them; but those men too long degraded in Poland were not yet deserving of the liberty that was offered them. They distrusted the intentions of the nobles, who, on their side, for the most part lamented the loss of their absurd prerogatives. Stanislaus Augustus and his partisans augmented still further the ill-will of the nobles, by representing to them the intentions of Kosciusko as disastrous to their order, and by caballing continually in favour of Russia.

In the mean time, the empress, not satisfied with augmenting the number of her troops in Poland, had sent her best generals thither. After several battles, in one of which Frederic William, who had advanced to support the Russians, fought at the head of his troops against Kosciusko, who was striving to prevent the junction of the Russian generals, Suvarof and Fersen, the Polish commander was attacked by the latter at Macziewice on the 4th of October. His talents, his valour, and his desperation, were unable to prevent the Poles from yielding to numbers. Almost the whole of his army were cut to pieces or obliged to lay down their arms. He himself, covered with wounds, was taken prisoner, ejaculating, *Finis Poloniæ!*

All who were able to escape from the conquerors went and shut themselves up in Praga, the eastern suburb of Warsaw, where 26,000 Poles and 104 heavy cannon and mortars defended the bridges over the Vistula and the approach to the ca-

pital. Suvarof was soon before the gates with an effective force of but 22,000 men and 86 field pieces; but even with such odds against him he resolved to do as he had done at Ismail, and carry the Polish lines at the point of the bayonet. After cannonading the defences for two days he gave the order for the assault at daybreak on the 4th of November. The trenches were carried after a desperate fight of five hours; the Russians swept into the town, murdering all before them, old men, women, and children; the wooden houses were speedily on fire; the bridges were broken down, so that the helpless crowds who attempted to escape into the city were remorselessly driven into the Vistula. Besides 10,000 Polish soldiers, 12,000 citizens of every age and sex perished in this wanton butchery.

Warsaw itself capitulated on the 5th of November, and was delivered up to the Russians on the 6th. Poland was now annihilated. One division of its troops after another was disarmed, and all the generals and officers who could be seized were carried off. The king, however, who could be induced to do anything if his comforts were spared, was used as an instrument to give to power the impress of right. He was again set nominally at the head of the kingdom till the robbers had agreed upon the division of the spoil, and had no longer need of him. Suvarof held a splendid military court for a year in Warsaw, far eclipsing the king, till at length the city was given up to the Prussians.\*

\* The whole of the year 1795 was spent in negotiations with Prussia, and the last treaty for the partition of Poland was not signed till the 24th of October, 1795. In December, Suvarof travelled from Warsaw to Petersburg, where the empress appropriated the Taurian palace for his residence, and nominated a special household for his service. On the 1st of January, 1796, Warsaw was first given up to the Prussians, and negotiations were carried on till the 21st of October, 1796, respecting the boundaries of the palatinates of Warsaw and Cracow. By virtue of this partition, first finally arranged in October, 1796, Austria obtained the chief parts of the waiwodeship of Cracow, the palatinates of Sandomir and Lublin, together with a portion of the district of Chelm and portions of the waiwodeships of Brzesk, Podalachia, and Massovia, which lie along the left bank of the Bog. All these districts contain about 834 German square miles. Prussia received those portions of Massovia and Podalachia which touch upon the right bank of that river, in Lithuania those parts of the palatinates of Troki and Samogitia which lie to the left of the Niemen, and, finally, a district in Little Poland which belonged to the waiwodeship of Cracow, making in all



Catharine had now conquered, either by her arms or by her intrigues, almost one half of Poland, the Crimea, the Kuban, and a part of the frontiers of Turkey. But she had no need of armaments and battles for usurping another rich and well-peopled country. Courland and Semigallia, where still reigned duke Peter, the feeble son of the famous Biren, had long been prepared for that annexation, which was now effected almost without an effort. The flattering reception given to the Courish nobles in Petersburg by the empress, distinctions, honours, posts, and pleasures, rendered their abode in the imperial residence far preferable to continuing in Mittau, and made them desirous of being under the sway of the sovereign of a vast empire, rather than live in obedience to a duke, the obscurity of whose origin they could not forget, and whom they regarded as their inferior. To bring the people to the same way of thinking as the nobles, Catharine artfully embroiled them with their neighbours, and created for them reasons of alarm. She began by instigating the inhabitants of Livonia to insist upon the fulfilment of an ancient convention, by which the Courlanders were obliged to bring all their merchandises to Riga: certainly a very strange and hard condition, by which a nation, that had on its coasts excellent harbours happily situated, should be obliged to go, at a great expense, to embark the products of its soil in a foreign city. The quarrel between the Livonians and the Courlanders was not yet terminated, when the empress sent engineers into Courland, to mark out a canal, to facilitate the transport of the merchandises of that country into Livonia. The Courlanders seeing this, and fearing lest they should be soon forced to make use of this canal, thought it better for them to be protected than oppressed by the empress, and to be her subjects rather than her neighbours.

about 1000 German square miles. Russia received the whole of what had hitherto been Polish Lithuania as far as the Niemen, and to the frontiers of the waiwodships of Brzesk and Nowogrodek, and thence to the Bog, together with the greater part of Samogitia. In Little Poland she obtained that part of Chelm which lies on the right bank of the Bog and the remainder of Volhynia, in all about 2000 German square miles. During the negotiations for the partition, Russia caused Stanislaus Augustus to lay down the crown. The three partitioning powers ensured him a yearly income of 200,000 ducats, and promised to pay his debts. The emperor Paul I. called him to Petersburg, where he died on the 12th of February, 1798.

Catharine, being informed of these dispositions, called the duke of Courland to her, under the pretence of conferring with him on matters of importance. No sooner was that prince at the foot of the throne of the autocratrix of the north, than the states of Courland held an assembly, wherein it was proposed to put the country under the supremacy of Russia. The principal members of the grand council faintly opposed this motion, observing, that before they proceeded to a resolution it would be expedient to wait the return of the duke. The oberburggraff Hoven rose up, and spoke a long time in favour of Russia. Some councillors expressed themselves of his opinion; others reproached him with treason. The dispute grew warm on both sides; challenges were reciprocally given and swords were about to be drawn, when the Russian general Pahlen appeared in the assembly. His presence restored tranquillity. No one presumed to raise his voice against Russia; and the proposal of the nobles was adopted.

The next day, March 18, 1795, the act was drawn up, by which Courland, Semigallia, and the circle of Pilten, made a formal surrender of themselves to the empress of Russia; and it was carried to Petersburg, where the duke of Courland learnt, from the mouth of his own subjects, that they themselves had deprived him of his dominions. The empress immediately sent a governor thither. Some discontent, however, remained in Courland: discontent brought on proscription; and the possessions of the proscribed were given to the courtiers of Catharine. The favourite Plato Zubof and his brother Valerian obtained a great part of those rich and shameful spoils.

The empress, who had so long given unavailing promises of assistance to the coalition against France, consented, in July, 1795, to join the English navy with a squadron of twelve ships of the line and eight frigates, the command of which was given to admiral Hanikof. But, never making treaties without a view to her own benefit, she stipulated that the ships should be provisioned at the expense of her ally, and sent home in thorough repair; by which means her raw mariners were disciplined, and her crazy vessels, mostly of fir timber, which would hardly bear the sea, and never rendered the least service to her allies, were completely refitted.

In this year Aga Mahomed Khan marched against Georgia, to punish it for having accepted the protectorate of Russia. Tiflis was sacked, and given up to fire and sword. On hearing of this bloody invasion, Catharine immediately declared war against Persia; and her armies, commanded by Valerian Zubof, were already in occupation of Baku, and a large portion of the Caspian shores, when her death put a stop to their progress, and her son, Paul I., ordered all the recent conquests to be abandoned.

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## CHAPTER XLVIII.

PROJECTED MATRIMONIAL ALLIANCE WITH SWEDEN—CATHARINE'S MORTIFYING DISAPPOINTMENT—HER DEATH—REMARKS ON HER CHARACTER AND HER REIGN.

AFTER the peace of Varela, Catharine set herself to devise some new means of re-establishing her interest in Sweden. To marry one of the grand-duchesses to the prince-royal then became her favourite project; and it is even said that this matrimonial alliance was a secret article in the treaty of peace. This at least is certain, that the grand-duchess Alexandra was trained up to the expectation of being one day queen of Sweden; while several persons about the young Gustavus endeavoured to inspire him with corresponding sentiments. It is not to be supposed that the king his father would have given his consent to a match so fraught with danger to Sweden; but the violent and sudden death of Gustavus III. frustrated the schemes of Catharine, whose design had been to send him at the head of his Swedes into France, there to act the same part as Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. had done in Germany and Poland, in the hope that he would there meet with a similar fate; in which case she would have made herself regent over the minority of an orphan king of Sweden, whom, together with his kingdom, she would have taken under her maternal care.

But the duke of Sudermania, having seized the reins of government during the minority of his nephew, displayed sentiments diametrically opposite to the Russian system. Less gallant than his brother, he did not feel himself disposed

to sacrifice his country to the ladies; and failed not to reciprocate the hatred which Catharine had conceived for him during the war, when the noise of his cannon had reached the inmost recesses of the palace of the czars. This naval war, in which, however, he had little reason to boast of his success, had irritated him against the Russians; and he was not ignorant of the raillery and invective which were liberally bestowed on him at the court of Petersburg, or that plays were even acted at the Hermitage, in which he was held up to ridicule.

The vilest corruption, the basest and most cowardly intrigues, were employed against him. Europe even saw, with fresh horror, a woman, who pretended to be an image of God adored on the throne, exciting revolt in a nation, buying traitors, and paying assassins. To remove the regent, substitute a council of her creatures in his stead, and harness Sweden to her chariot by the side of Poland, were the objects at which she aimed, and which she sought to attain by all the means that could be devised. Stackelberg, whose wit and urbanity had charmed the late king,\* and who, to use his own words, had found in that prince "a true and worthy knight of his immortal sovereign," demanded to be recalled. His haughtiness could not stoop to act a part of little con-

\* Of all the ministers employed by Catharine, count Stackelberg had the most wit and the most pride; and this he displayed particularly in Poland. M. von Thugut being sent to that country by the emperor, when he was to have his audience of Poniatowski, was introduced into a saloon, where, seeing a man gravely seated, and surrounded by Polish lords respectfully standing before him, he took him for the king, and began his complimentary speech. It was Stackelberg, who was in no hurry to set him right. Thugut, informed of his mistake, was vexed and ashamed. In the evening, being at cards with the king and Stackelberg, he played a card, saying, "The king of clubs."—"You are wrong," said the king, "it is the knave." The Austrian ambassador, pretending to have been mistaken, answered, slapping his forehead, "Ah, sire, pardon me; this is the second time to-day I have taken a knave for a king." Stackelberg, ready as he was at repartee, could only bite his lips. When he returned from Sweden, his time was spent loitering in the ante-chambers of Zubof. He was always one in Catharine's little parties, however, and was thus reduced to amuse, after having served her. His greatest humiliation, no doubt, was that of being named by Paul lord of the bed-chamber in waiting to the very king of Poland who had frequently danced attendance in his ante-chamber at Warsaw.



sequence with the regent of a young king, after having himself been so long regent over an old one in Poland. Romantzof succeeded him; but plots and intrigues, of which the regent complained, soon required his recal. The deepest indignation was felt at the impudence with which the traitor Armfeldt was set on, protected, and defended by Russia; in spite of the obvious proofs of his attempts, and the most pressing remonstrances. At the very time when all the kings in Europe seemed to make common cause to hunt down every man who was barely suspected of rebellion, a regent of Sweden in vain demanded, from court to court, a man who had conspired against his life and the government of his country, which he would have sold to a foreign power. From court to court his demands were evaded in an insulting manner; and Armfeldt at length retired to Russia to set him at defiance, being allowed to appear at court, receiving a pension, and living there even during the visit of the king and the regent.

Even after the exposure of Armfeldt's conspiracy, and of the part played in it by Zubof and his subordinates, Catharine did not abandon her project. To strike, therefore, at the root of her hopes, the regent demanded in marriage for his ward one of the princesses of Mecklenburg, who was solemnly betrothed to him, and the match was announced in form to all the courts of Europe. Count Schverin, who had already been in Russia, where his person had gained him many friends among the ladies, was despatched to Petersburg with this commission; but at Viborg he found an order from the empress, which forbade him to make his appearance at court. This was certainly strange conduct, and displays rather the pique of an irritated woman than the reserve of a sovereign. Because the king of Sweden had espoused another princess instead of her granddaughter, she refused to receive the notification conformably to established custom! The respect she owed herself, her sex, and above all her amiable granddaughter, should at least have saved her from the humiliation of thus publishing her chagrin. On this occasion she ceased to act the part of the *great Catharine*.\*

To account for this step, no less indelicate than insulting,

\* The Russians have aggrandised even her name; they say, in their language, *Yekatarina*, which can only be translated *Arch-Catharine*.

she directed her *chargé d'affaires*, or rather *d'intrigues*, at Stockholm, to deliver to the regent a note, wherein she not only made the duke of Sudermania's maintaining the connexion between Sweden and France a crime of *treason to her imperial majesty*, but even seemed to insinuate that he was privy to the assassination of the king his brother, the avenging of which she claimed to herself. The vexation of Catharine, and the folly of her ministers, went still further. Everything announced that they were about to treat the king of Sweden like Molière's Sganarelle, by obliging him at the cannon's mouth to break his engagement to the princess of Mecklenburg, and marry the grand-duchess Alexandra.\* The amiable qualities of this princess would have justified a young king in fighting to obtain her hand rather than to escape it. A report was also spread, that the king was already enamoured of her; that his uncle had done violence to his inclinations; and that he wished for nothing more than to defer his marriage with the princess of Mecklenburg till he became of age, that he might then declare in favour of the other lady who aspired to his hand.

There is no doubt that several Swedes, gained over by the promises of Catharine, and by the hopes they had formed from the munificence of that ostentatious princess, endeavoured to inspire the young king with such resolutions, and to excite in his heart the same passion as had been raised in that of the amiable Alexandra. A regular correspondence was even kept up between Schverin, Steinbach, and some persons who had access to the grand-duchesses; and several of the letters were shown to the empress through the medium of madame Budberg, chief governess to the princesses.

After such violent proceedings against the regent, who could expect to see him bend and submit? This, however, he did: at least he suffered himself to be either frightened or bribed. M. Budberg, who had just made the tour of Germany to find a wife for the grand-duke Constantine, having

\* Some planks were laid at that time with great noise and preparation on the ice of the Neva, strong enough then to bear castles, to facilitate, as was said, the passage of the artillery which was to be sent into Finland. The ministers and generals talked publicly of the approaching war; a proof that it was all a deception.

brought with him the princess of Coburg and her three daughters, was deemed capable of surmounting the difficulties experienced in obtaining a husband for the young grand-duchess. At first he repaired to Mecklenburg, to negotiate a renunciation; and was then sent to Stockholm as an ambassador. Threats, promises, and money at length prevailed: it was settled that the king's marriage should be deferred till he was of age; and the regent, willing, no doubt, to show that his pupil was free in his choice and in his conduct, at length consented to make a journey, to which he was so kindly invited. The affair of the marriage, which was the true motive of this invitation, was touched but slightly and sentimentally: "If, as they say, the two children love each other already; if, when they see each other, they should still prove mutually agreeable; we will consider of the means of rendering them happy." Such was the language of the empress. If she could get the king to her court, Catharine thought she should have the game in her own hands. Reckoning on the charms of the princess, and the kindnesses which she herself would lavish on the king, the regent, and their suite, she doubted not but that young Gustavus, after having seen her whom he had ventured to refuse for reasons of state, would give both the kingdom and the glory of Charles XII. to possess such a bride.

On the 25th of August, 1796, he arrived with his uncle and a numerous suite at St. Petersburg, where his presence excited the liveliest interest, and nothing was neglected to make him pleased with his reception. All seemed to speed happily towards the desired end. The only difficulty that remained was that of religion. Catharine had felt the pulse of her court on this subject, and even consulted the archbishop, to know whether her granddaughter might abjure the orthodox faith. Instead of answering in the way she anticipated, he merely replied: "Your majesty is all powerful." Afterwards, not finding himself supported by his clergy, who he had expected would be more tractable, he was desirous of appearing more Russian than the Russians themselves; and, to flatter the national pride, he resolved to make a queen of Sweden of the Greek religion. The king was enamoured, dazzled: the regent appeared to be completely gained: could it then be supposed that they would reject this arrangement, after such

decisive steps had been taken ? The empress, persuaded that there was no room for retreat, left to her favourite ministers, Zubof and Markof, the care of drawing up the contract conformably to her views. On the other hand, the Swedish ambassador formally demanded the princess in marriage, at a special audience granted him for that purpose ; and the day and hour were fixed on which the parties were to be publicly betrothed.

This day, which was the 21st of September, exposed the fortunate and imperious Catharine to the greatest chagrin and humiliation she had ever experienced. The whole court received orders to assemble in full dress in the throne-room. The young princess, habited as a bride, and attended by her sisters, the grand-dukes and their wives, and all the ladies and gentlemen, with the grand-duke, father to the princess, and the grand-duchess, who came from Gatshina to be present at the ceremony of betrothing their daughter, were assembled by seven o'clock in the evening. The empress herself arrived in all imaginable pomp. No one was wanting but the young bridegroom, whose tardiness at first excited astonishment. The repeated going out and coming in of prince Zubof, and the impatience which the empress exhibited, showed that something was amiss. The king, expected like the spouse of the eleven thousand virgins, did not appear.

The occasion of this strange delay was as follows : Gustavus was to have been at court at seven in the evening. At six, the minister Markof brought him the contract and the articles of alliance, which he had just drawn up with Zubof. Gustavus having read them over, appeared greatly astonished on finding they contained articles to which he had not agreed with the empress ; and asked, whether it was from her that they were brought to him to sign ?\*

Markof answering in the affirmative, the king replied, that he could not possibly consent. He observed, that he would lay no restraint on the conscience of the princess ; that she might possess her own religion in private, but he could not allow her either a chapel or priests in the palace : on the

\* These articles were, that the princess should have her private chapel and clergy in the royal palace, besides certain engagements into which the Swedes were to enter against France, which were kept very secret.



contrary, in public, and in all outward ceremonies, she must conform to the religion of the country. The reader may conceive the surprise and embarrassment of Markof: he was obliged to take up his papers, return to Zubof, and inform him that the king refused his signature. He soon after came back in the greatest agitation, to say, that the empress was already in the throne-room, surrounded by all her court; that it was no longer possible to speak to her; that she waited for the king; and that he flattered himself his majesty would not bring the affair to an open rupture, which would be an unheard-of insult to the Russian sovereign, and to the whole empire. Besborodko, and several others, arrived in succession, exhorting, urging, praying the king to yield. All the Swedes who were called in inclined the same way; they were in the pay of Catharine. The regent contented himself with saying, that it depended on the king; drew him aside, and took a turn round the room with him, appearing himself to press him, while speaking to him in a low voice. The king answered aloud, "No, no, I will not; I cannot; I will never sign them!" He withstood all the remonstrances, all the importunities of the Russian ministers; and at length, vexed at the pertinacity with which they beset him, he retired to his chamber and fastened the door, after giving again a clear and peremptory refusal to sign anything inconsistent with the laws of his country. The Russian ministers remained stupified at the audacity of a boy, who dared thus resist their sovereign, and concerted how to break the catastrophe to her.

These debates between the ministers of the empress and the king continued till near ten o'clock. Catharine and her court were still waiting; but at last it was necessary to inform her, that the affair was broken off. She rose, attempted to speak, but her tongue faltered; she almost fainted; and even had a slight fit, the precursor of that which carried her off a few weeks after. She withdrew, and the court was dismissed, under a pretence of a sudden indisposition of the king. A week afterwards Gustavus quitted St. Petersburg, presents being made on both sides, in order to gloss over the affair and prevent irksome remarks.

The visit of the king of Sweden to Petersburg, the entertainments to which it gave rise, and the mortifying circumstances in which it terminated, hastened, no doubt, the death

of Catharine. For six weeks she had given herself up to a round of amusements, and subjected herself to continual fatigue: for to her, the going up and down the stairs of the palace, the business of dressing, and appearing in public, had long been a wearisome task; and the more so, as she was still desirous of looking young and healthful, and was always averse to the use of her sedan.\*

Towards the close of her life, Catharine had so increased in size as to be an object almost of deformity. Her legs, which were always swollen and often ulcerated, had entirely lost their shape, and she could no longer boast that handsome foot which had formerly been so much admired. The noted pirate, Lambro Canziani, whom admiral Ribas, through the favour of Zubof, had introduced to the empress, and who acted in quality of buffoon, after having previously served her as corsair in the Archipelago, was desirous also of prescribing as her physician. He persuaded her that he had an infallible remedy for her legs; and was even himself at the pains of fetching water from the sea for the purpose of a cold bath, to be used once a day for her feet. The application succeeded at first, and she joined with Lambro in ridiculing the prescriptions of her physicians: but the swellings soon returned, and from late hours and fatigue her disorder greatly increased. When the king's refusal was announced to her, and she was obliged to dismiss her court after having summoned it to celebrate the betrothing of her granddaughter, she experienced a slight stroke of apoplexy. From the constraint which for several days after she imposed on herself, that she might betray no symptom of the vexation she felt at the refractoriness of *the little king*,† the tendency to that

\* Aware of the first of these difficulties, several of her courtiers, upon occasion of the balls and entertainments that were given by them in honour of the king, contrived for her ease that the stairs of their houses should form a gentler ascent, which was richly carpeted. A gallantry of this kind cost Besborodko no less a sum than 3000 rubles (300*l.*), which he expended to render his house commodious for her reception.

† This was an epithet which she gave him in derision. The young prince was ambitious from his childhood of the title of grown man. Walking one day in a park, two women cried, "Let us run to the pathway to see our little king." Gustavus, hearing them, replied, somewhat piqued: "Little king! pray, ladies, have you then a greater one?"

malady betrayed itself increasingly in her turgid and livid countenance.

On the evening of the empress's visit with the king at the house of Samoïlof, a bright meteor shot from the sky over her head, and fell into the Neva; and this fact was the common talk of the whole city. Some would have it, that this beautiful star was a prognostic of the young queen's journey into Sweden; while others, remarking that it made its descent near the spot where the citadel and the tombs of the sovereigns were situated, tremblingly whispered that it was the harbinger of the approaching dissolution of the empress. The phrase *tremblingly whispered* is literally exact; for in Russia death and the empress were words that could not be coupled together without danger of punishment.

On the 4th of November, 1796, Catharine had what was called her *Little Hermitage*, and displayed an uncommon flow of spirits, having just received news that the French under Moreau had been obliged to repass the Rhine. She amused herself greatly with Leof Narishkin, her grand ecuyer and first buffoon, trafficking with him for all sorts of baubles, which he usually carried in his pockets to sell to her, like an itinerant pedlar, whose character he attempted to personate. She rallied him with great pleasantry upon the terrors to which he was subject upon hearing any obituary intelligence; informed him of the death of the king of Sardinia, which she had also just learned; and spoke of this event in a free and jocular manner. She retired, however, somewhat earlier than usual, assigning as a reason, that too much laughing had given her slight symptoms of colic.

The next morning she arose at her accustomed hour, and sending for her favourite, gave him a short audience. She afterwards transacted business with her secretaries, but dismissed the last that came, bidding him wait awhile in the ante-chamber. Some time elapsed, and the servant in waiting, uneasy at not being called, and hearing no noise in the apartment, at last opened the door, when to his surprise and terror he saw the empress prostrate on the floor without sense or motion. The man ran for the favourite, whose apartment was above; physicians were sent for; and Zubof despatched his brother with a message to the grand-duke Paul. Meanwhile the imperial family, and the rest of the household, were

ignorant of her situation, which was kept secret. Until eleven o'clock, the empress's accustomed hour of summoning the grand-dukes, it was not known that she was at all indisposed; the fact of her being seriously ill did not transpire till one; and was then mentioned with a timid and mysterious caution, through fear of the consequences of mistake. "You might see," says Masson, "two courtiers meet each other, both perfectly acquainted with the circumstance of the apoplexy, yet questioning one another, answering in turn, watching each other's looks, and cautiously advancing step by step, that they might arrive both together at the terrible point, and be able to talk of what both already knew. It is necessary to have frequented a court, and especially the court of Russia, to be able to judge of the importance of these things, and exculpate the historian from the charge of absurdity for relating actual circumstances."

In the mean time, those whom chance, or their connexion with office, placed in the way of being early informed of the truth, hastened to communicate it to their families and friends; for the death of the empress was looked to as the epoch of some extraordinary revolution in the state, as well from the character of Paul as from the projects and dispositions of which Catharine was suspected. It was, therefore, of importance to be able to take precautions in time; and the court first, and presently the city, were in an alarming state of agitation and anxiety.

Five or six couriers arrived nearly at the same instant at Gatshina, but the grand-duke was absent. He was gone a few miles with his court to inspect a mill, which he had ordered to be constructed. Upon receiving the intelligence, he appeared extremely affected. He soon, however, recovered from his emotion, asked a thousand questions of the messengers, and gave orders for his journey.

Paul arrived in the evening from Gatshina. Catharine still breathed: but nothing was thought of except the changes that were about to take place, and the individual who was on the point of succeeding her. Another day passed in anxiety and expectation. In the pale and haggard countenances of the old courtiers, wherever they were seen, mortification, terror, and grief were depicted; and they successively retired to give place to the new comers. The



palace was surrounded, and all the streets that led to it were crowded with carriages ; and he who could claim the slightest acquaintance passed the day there, waiting the effect of this sudden event. Orders were given that no person should quit the city, and no courier was suffered to pass the gates.

It was generally believed that Catharine had died the preceding evening, but that her death, for reasons of state, was still concealed. The fact, however, is, that she was all this time in a lethargy. The remedies which were administered produced their natural effect, and she had even moved one of her feet, and pressed the hand of one of her women : *but, happily for Paul, the power of speech was gone for ever.* About ten in the evening she appeared suddenly to revive, and began to rattle in the throat in a most terrible manner. The imperial family hastened to her ; but this new and shocking spectacle was too much for the princesses, who were obliged to withdraw. At last she gave a lamentable shriek, which was heard in the neighbouring apartments, and died, after having continued for thirty-seven hours in a state of insensibility.

For herself and her court, the reign of Catharine II. had been brilliant and happy ; but the last years of it were particularly disastrous for the people and the empire. All the springs of government were relaxed and impaired. Every general, governor, chief of department, was become a petty despot. Rank, justice, impunity, were sold to the highest bidder. An oligarchy of about a score of knaves partitioned Russia, pillaged, by themselves or others, the finances, and shared the spoils of the unfortunate. Their lowest valets, and even their slaves, obtained in a short time offices of considerable importance and emolument. One had a salary of from three to four hundred rubles a year (30*l.* or 40*l.*), which could not possibly be increased by any honest dealing, yet was he sufficiently rich to build round the palace houses valued at fifty thousand crowns (12,500*l.*). Catharine, so far from inquiring into the impure source of such sudden wealth, rejoiced to see her capital thus embellished under her eyes, and applauded the inordinate luxury of these wretches, which she erroneously considered as a proof of the prosperity of her reign. In the worst days of France before the revolution, pillage was never so general, and so

easy. Whoever received a sum of money from the crown for any undertaking, impudently retained half, and afterwards complained of its insufficiency, for the purpose of obtaining more; and either an additional sum was granted, or the enterprise abandoned. The great plunderers even divided the booty of the little ones, and thus became accomplices in their thefts. A minister knew almost to a ruble what his signature would procure to his secretary; and a colonel felt no embarrassment in talking with a general of the profits of the army, and the extortions he practised upon the soldiers.\* Every one, from the peculiar favourite to the lowest in employ, considered the property of the state as a harvest to be reaped, and grasped at it with as much avidity as the populace at an ox given up to be devoured. The Orlofs, Potemkin, and Panin, filled their places with some degree of dignity; but in general, during the last years of Catharine, none were so little as the great. Without knowledge, pride, or probity, they could not even boast that false honour which is to loyalty what hypocrisy is to virtue: unfeeling as bashaws, rapacious as tax-gatherers, pilfering as lacqueys, and venal as the meanest abigails of a play, they might truly be called the rabble of the empire. Their creatures, their hirelings, their valets, and even their relations grew rich, not by their bounty, but by the extortions committed in their name, and the traffic made of their credit: they also were robbed themselves, as they robbed the crown. The meanest services rendered to these men were paid by the state; and the wages of their buffoons, servants, musicians, private secretaries, and even tutors of

\* The colonel was the despot of his regiment, of which he had the exclusive management, in whole and in detail. The Russian army, wherever it may be situated, whether in a subjected territory, the territory of an ally, or that of an enemy, always living at free quarters, the colonels regularly take to themselves nearly the whole of the money destined for its support. By way of indemnification, they turn the horses into the fields and the men into the houses of the peasants, there to live free of expense. The pay of a colonel is from seven to eight hundred rubles (70*l.* or 80*l.*) only a year; but the profit he derives from a regiment amounts to fifteen or twenty thousand (1500*l.* or 2000*l.*). A minister asking one day some favour of the empress for a poor officer, she replied, "If he be poor it is his own fault; he has long had a regiment." Thus robbery was privileged, and probity laughed at and despised.—*Masson, Mémoires Secrets.*

their children, were defrayed out of some public fund of which they had the control. Some few among them sought for talents, and appeared to esteem merit; but neither talents nor merit acquired a fortune under their protection, or partook of their wealth; partly from the avarice of those patrons, but still more from their total want of decency and judgment. The only way of gaining their favour was by becoming their buffoon, and the only mode of turning it to account was by turning knave.

Thus, during this reign, almost every man in office, or who had credit at court, was the favourite of fortune, and acquired riches and honours. At the galas given by the empress, swarms of new created counts and princes made their appearance, and that at a time when in France all titles were about to be abolished. If we except the Soltikofs, we shall find at this period no family of distinction taken into favour. In any other country this would have been no evil; but in Russia, where the rich nobility is the only class that has any education, and often any principles of honour, it was a serious calamity to the empire. Besides, all these upstarts were so many hungry leeches, who must be fed with the best blood of the state, and fattened with the hard earnings of the people. A frequent change of kings is often not burdensome to a state in which the throne remains hereditary; but a continual change of favourites and ministers, who must all load their hives before they depart, is enough to ruin any country but Russia. How many millions must it have cost to fill successively the rapacious maws of about a dozen peculiar favourites? How many, to render rich and noble the Besborodkos, the Zavadofskys, the Markofs, and a too numerous list of others who might be named? The Orlofs, Potemkin, and the Zubofs, acquired revenues greater than those of kings; and their underlings, agents in the sale of their signatures, and managers of their petty traffic, became wealthier than the most successful merchants. Castéra has given a detailed list of the gifts bestowed on Catharine's twelve favourites, making in the total a sum of 88,820,000 rubles. Of this enormous sum Masson remarks that, according to a pretty accurate list in his own possession, it is less by one-third than the actual amount which was publicly bestowed upon the favourites; and this again was exceeded

in value by the gifts lavished on them in secret. All this profusion, and more besides to an incalculable amount, was made at the cost of a state which was brought to the verge of bankruptcy. "If this woman lives to the natural period of human life," said prince Scherbatof, "she will drag down Russia with her into the grave."

We may easily imagine what must have been the effect of Catharine's example upon the morals of her subjects. "Almost all the ladies of the court," Masson tells us, "kept men with the title and office of favourites: I do not say lovers," he observes, "for that would imply sentiment; while theirs was merely gross desire, or frequently a wish to follow the fashion. This taste was become as common as eating and drinking, or dancing and music. Tender intrigues were unknown, and strong passions still more rare. Debauchery and ambition had banished love. Marriage was merely an association, in which convenience alone was considered: it was fortunate if friendship sometimes came unsought, to lighten the chains which the interest of parents, or vanity alone, had formed. The discovery of a society, called the Club of Natural Philosophers, made at Moscow, completely proves the depravity of manners under the reign of Catharine. This was a kind of order surpassing in turpitude everything related of the most immodest institutions and mysteries. The men and women, who were initiated, assembled on certain days, to indulge promiscuously in the most infamous debaucheries. Husbands introduced their wives into this society; and brothers, their sisters. The novices were not admitted till they had been examined, and gone through their probations; the women being admitted by the men; the men, by the women. After a sumptuous feast the company were paired by lot. When the French revolution took place, the Russian police was directed to examine and dissolve all kinds of orders and assemblies; and on this occasion the Club of Natural Philosophers was examined, and its members were obliged to disclose its mysteries. As the members of both sexes belonged to the most wealthy and powerful families, and their assemblies had nothing to do with politics, nothing more was done than to shut up and prohibit their scandalous lodge."

Russian literature and art owes nothing to Catharine, though she corresponded with Voltaire and Dalember, in-



vited Diderot to her court and pensioned him. She purchased, indeed, a few libraries and collections of pictures, pensioned a few flatterers, flattered a few celebrated men, who might be instrumental in spreading her fame, and readily sent a medal or a snuff-box to a German writer who dedicated some hyperbolical work to her: but it was necessary to have come from some distance to please her, and to have acquired a great name to be entitled to her suffrage, and particularly to obtain any recompense. Genius might be born at her feet without being noticed, and still more without being encouraged; yet, jealous of every kind of fame, and especially of that which Frederick the Great had obtained by his writings, she was desirous of becoming an author, that she might share in it. She accordingly wrote her celebrated "Instructions for a Code of Laws;" several moral tales and allegories for the education of her grandchildren; and a number of dramatic pieces and proverbs, which were acted and admired at the Hermitage.

Of all her writings, her letters to Voltaire are certainly the best. They are even more interesting than those of the old philosophical courtier himself, who sold her watches and knitted stockings for her;\* and who repeats in his letters the same ideas and compliments in a hundred different forms, and excites her continually to drive the Turks out of Europe, instead of advising her to render her own subjects free and happy. When she published her Instructions,† all Europe resounded with applause, and bestowed upon her by anticipation the title of legislatrix of the north. Catharine ordered deputies to be assembled from the different nations of her vast empire; but it was only that they might hear this celebrated performance read, and that she might receive their compliments; for as soon as this was done, they were

\* This he says himself in one of his letters to her.

† It is known that her Instruction for a Code came under the *index expurgatorius*, and was prohibited in France. Catharine and Voltaire joined in railing at this proceeding. Who would have thought that, twenty years after, all French publications whatever would be proscribed in Russia, and that a lieutenant of police of the very same Catharine would confiscate at St. Petersburg, in the shop of Gay the bookseller, *L'Avis au Peuple par Tissot*, "Tissot's Advice to the People," alleging that the people wanted no advice, and that it was a dangerous book?

all sent back to their distant homes, some in disgrace for their firmness, others decorated with medals for their servility. The manuscript was deposited in a magnificent case, to be exhibited to the curiosity of strangers. A sort of committee was nominated to reduce these laws into form; and if a favourite or minister had any dependent for whom he wished to provide, or any buffoon whom he wanted to maintain free of expense, he was appointed a member of this committee, whence he derived a salary.\* Yet all Europe vociferated that Russia had laws, because Catharine had written a preface to a code, and had subjected a hundred different people to the same system of slavery.†

Catharine was neither fond of poetry nor of music, and she often confessed it. She could not endure the noise of the orchestra between the acts of a play, and she commonly silenced it. This defect of taste and feeling is astonishing in a woman who appeared in other respects so happily constituted, yet may serve to explain how, with so extraordinary a capacity and genius, she could become so obdurate and sanguinary. At her Tauric palace she constantly dined with the two pictures of the sacking of Otchakof and Ismail before her eyes, in which Cazanova had represented, with most hideous accuracy, the blood flowing in streams, the limbs torn from the bodies and still palpitating, the demoniac fury of the murderers, and the convulsive agonies of the murdered. It was upon these scenes of horror that her attention and imagination were fixed, while Gasparini and Mandini displayed their vocal powers, or Sarti conducted a concert in her presence.

This same empress, who wrote plays herself; who admired Ségur for his wit, and heard him sometimes repeat his verses; who had the most ridiculous farces played before her by her old courtiers, and particularly by count Stackel-

\* Masson says he knew, among other personages, one Mitrophanus Popof, a buffoon, bigot, and interpreter of dreams to a lady of the court, who was a member of this committee: he had never heard of the Instruction for a Code, and was unable to read it.

† The Instruction for a Code is so literally taken from Montesquieu and Beccaria, that a Frenchman, who undertook to translate it, thought he could not do better than copy the text of these celebrated writers. The curious may be satisfied of this fact by examining the translation, which was printed for Grasset, at Lausanne.

berg\* and the Austrian minister, recalled and disgraced one of her own ministers because he wrote his despatches facetiously, made pleasant French verses, had composed a tragedy, and was desirous of illustrating the genius of his country by publishing historical eulogies of the great men of Russia. This was prince Beloselsky, envoy at the court of Turin, a man of taste and ability, who had expended a fortune in patronising the arts, and much of his time in cultivating them.

Before Catharine's death the monuments of her reign resembled already so many wrecks and dilapidations: codes, colonies, education, establishments, manufactories, edifices, hospitals,† canals, towns, fortresses, everything had been begun, and nothing finished. As soon as a project entered her head, all preceding ones gave place, and her thoughts were fixed on that alone, till a new idea arose to draw off her attention. She abandoned her code to drive the Turks out of Europe. After the glorious peace of Kainardji, she appeared for awhile to attend to the interior administration of her affairs, but all was presently forgotten, that she might be queen of Tauris. Her next project was the re-establishment of the throne of Constantine: to which succeeded that of humbling and punishing the king of Sweden. Afterwards the invasion of Poland became her ruling passion; and so imperiously did it fascinate her, that a second Pugatchef might have arrived at the gates of Petersburg without inducing her to relinquish her hold. She died, again meditating the destruction of Sweden, the ruin of Prussia, and mortified at the success of French republicanism. Thus was she incessantly led away by some new passion still stronger in its influence than the preceding one, and thus neglected her government both in its whole and its parts.

\* In the little societies of Catharine, all sorts of frolics and gambols were played. The old gouty courtiers made grotesque efforts to frisk and caper; and the grand-duke Constantine one day actually broke the arm of the feeble count Stackelberg by rudely jostling against him and throwing him down.

† One hospital, however, founded by Catharine, deserves to be mentioned as a characteristic establishment. It was destined for the reception of fifty ladies infected with a certain disease. No question was asked, either as to the name or quality of those who presented themselves, and they were treated with equal care, respect, and discretion. This last word was even marked on the linen appointed for their use.

The genius of Catharine required a nation so new and malleable, and of which she might say, as the statuary in La Fontaine says of his block of marble: "Shall I make of it a god, or a table?" Of the Russian she could not make a god, but she might have made a man; her greatest crime is the not having placed her glory in doing this.\* By submitting to the reign of Catharine and her twelve favourites, Russia proved itself the most debased of nations.

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

### ACCESSION OF PAUL—CONDUCT AND PROJECTS OF CATHARINE WITH REGARD TO HER SON—HIS FIRST STEPS AS EMPEROR—HIS ECCENTRICITIES.

ONE of the worst traits in Catharine's wicked life was her conduct to that son in whose right she governed Russia five-and-thirty years. In his infancy he evinced qualities which were stifled by her ill-treatment. He had sense, activity, a disposition for the sciences, and sentiments of order and justice: but all these perished for want of being cultivated. Her dislike of him has been urged as a proof of his being actually the son of Peter III., and this proof is of considerable weight. She could not bear him, kept him at a distance, surrounded him with spies, held him in restraint, exposed him to every kind of humiliation; and while her favourites, inferior to her son in years, governed Russia and wallowed in wealth, he lived retired, insignificant, and in want of necessaries. Thus she soured his temper, and rendered him capricious and suspicious. Assuredly a mother must be highly culpable who inspires her own child with hatred and contempt. But what other sentiments could

\* Catharine, who in her youth was not afraid to have the question discussed, whether it would not be proper to emancipate the peasants, ended by reducing to similar slavery those provinces which had retained some franchises. Viasemsky, whom Momonof punningly called *Volterre* (the land-stealer), with a single stroke of the pen reduced the Cossacks, Tatars, and Finns to the state of slaves, in order to augment the capitation; notwithstanding that Catharine had acknowledged and guaranteed their rights.



he entertain? Not satisfied with depriving him of the affection and prerogatives that he ought to have enjoyed as a son, she resolved to take from him likewise the rights and pleasures of a father. His wife came almost every year to lie in at Tzarskoeselo, and left her children there in the hands of strangers. They were brought up under Catharine, without the father or mother having the least influence in their education, or authority over their conduct. Latterly they were even whole months without seeing them. Thus she sought to alienate the hearts of these children from parents whom they scarcely knew.

Death took Catharine by surprise. It was evident to those who were acquainted with her court, and the unfortunate estrangement between the mother and son, that she entertained a wish to have another successor. The dread of reflecting on the end of her days, and on that of her reign, which she feared still more, with the death of Potemkin,\* prevented her from accomplishing this project while she had time for it, or from confirming it by a will. The youth of the grand-duke Alexander, and still more the goodness of his head and heart, were afterwards obstacles to the execution of her design. Her predilection for the young prince, worthy no doubt of a purer source, was very striking; and her private conferences with him began to be frequent and mysterious. Perhaps she might in time have succeeded in stifling in him the voice of nature, have corrupted his understanding and his morals, and driven him imperceptibly to act a detestable part towards his father. After his tutor, la Harpe, had quitted him, and a separate court was established for him, he was the worst attended and least occupied of princes. He lived more effeminately and obscurely than the heir of a sultan in the harem of a seraglio. This kind of life must at length have stifled all his excellent qualities. Had he been willing, or had Catharine even been able to speak but a few words before she died, Paul probably would never have reigned. Who would have declared for him? and to what rights could he have appealed?† If the Russians had no fixed rights, still

\* Many have supposed that she entertained a design of making Potemkin king of Tauris, in order to have his support in disinheriting Paul, and proclaiming Alexander czarevitch.

† Paul had, indeed, been proclaimed czarevitch, or heir to the

less had their sovereigns. Since Peter I., who arrogated to himself the power of nominating his successor, the throne of the czars had been occupied by scarcely any other than usurpers, who had overturned each other with more barbarity and confusion than the successors of Othman. Catharine I. became empress because Mentchikof had the boldness to proclaim her; Peter II. reigned by virtue of a will; Anne was elected by a council, the senate and the army; Ivan was made emperor by an ukase; Elizabeth said, in her manifesto, that she ascended the throne of her father because the people willed it, and the guards had revolted; and on these grounds she condemned a prince in the cradle to a perpetual prison; and his relations, as innocent as himself, experienced the same fate. Peter III. reigned by favour of Elizabeth; and when he was dethroned, Catharine II. ascending the throne of Russia, declared that Heaven itself had called her to it. A son supplanting his father would not, after such a series, have excited any remarkable disgust, but the sudden death of Catharine happily prevented that catastrophe. The dreadful shriek she gave as she expired, was the voice that proclaimed Paul emperor of all the Russias. His wife was the first who fell at his feet, and paid him homage with all her children: he raised her up, embraced her and them, giving them assurance of his imperial and paternal kindness. The court, the chief officers of the different departments and of the army, all who were on the spot, came then to prostrate themselves, and take the oath to him, each according to his rank and seniority. A detachment of guards conducted him into

throne. He attempted to remove the confusion that prevailed in the succession of the czars, by an act which he promulgated at his coronation, and which he had framed in concert with his wife, in the form of a will, so early as the year 1788; consequently when he was only grand-duke, and of course could dispose of nothing. The year 1788 was the time when Potemkin was in the zenith of his power. It appears that Paul, at that juncture, apprehended some unhappy catastrophe, since he made these arrangements: in fact, it was then in agitation to disinherit him, and divide the empire between his eldest son and Potemkin. In this act, Paul, though merely grand-duke, arrogates to himself the same right as Peter I.—that of nominating his successor. Accordingly, he bequeaths the empire to his eldest son, and his male descendants; failing these also, his female descendants were to succeed in an order which Paul laid down, idly endeavouring to prevent and provide for all the inconveniences that could occur to the end of time.

the palace, and the officers and soldiers arriving in haste from Pavlofsky and Gatshina, swore fealty to him; the heads of the different colleges hastened to take the same oath. The emperor repaired himself to the senate to receive it; and this memorable night passed without disturbance or confusion.

The next day, Paul was proclaimed emperor everywhere, and his son Alexander *czarevitch*, or heir-presumptive to the throne. Thus, after five-and-thirty years spent amid restraint, denials, offences, and contempt, the son of Catharine, at the age of forty-three, was at length master of himself and of all the Russias. The first steps which he took seemed to contradict the reports of his stern and capricious disposition. He had long suffered by the abuses and disorders of the court: bred in the school of misfortune, the crucible in which great minds are refined, and little ones evaporate; a distant spectator of affairs, scrutinising the plans and conduct of his mother, he had had thirty years' leisure to regulate his own. Accordingly, it appeared that he had in his pocket a multitude of regulations ready drawn up, which he had nothing to do but to unfold, and put in execution with astonishing rapidity.

Far from imitating the conduct which his mother had held with respect to him, he immediately called his sons about him, entrusted each with the command of one of the regiments of guards, and made the eldest military governor of Petersburg,—an important post, which chained the young prince to his father's side. His first behaviour towards the empress surprised and delighted every one. He suddenly changed his conduct towards her, assigned her a considerable revenue, increased those of his children in proportion, and loaded his family with caresses and kindnesses.

His conduct towards the favourite likewise had every appearance of generosity. He seemed moved with his affliction; and, acknowledging the attachment he showed to his mother, continued him in his offices in flattering terms. The ministers, and the heads of the different departments, were likewise confirmed in their posts; and the most powerful were even promoted, and received additional favours.

The first ukase he issued announced pacific dispositions,

and must particularly have attached the nobility to him.\* A levy of recruits recently ordered by Catharine, which would have taken one peasant in every hundred, was suspended and annulled by this ukase. This levy, however, was a few months after renewed.

Every hour, every moment announced some wise change, some just punishment, or some merited favour. The court and city were surprised. People began to imagine that his character had been mistaken, and that his long and melancholy pupilage had not entirely depraved it. All the world saw itself happily deceived in its expectations, and the conduct of the grand-duke was forgotten in that of the emperor; but it was too soon brought again into remembrance. Let us bestow a few minutes more on the hopes of happiness which he promised his empire.

The first two political steps taken by Paul inspired confidence, gained the nobility, and suspended two horrible scourges which Catharine, at her death, seemed to have bequeathed to Russia—war, and a state bankruptcy. She had at length resolved to act directly against France, by succouring the emperor of Germany and attacking Prussia.† In consequence, she had issued orders for raising near a hundred thousand recruits. The coffers of the state being emptied, and assignats multiplied to such a point that they were threatened with the same fate as those of France;‡ she thought proper to double her current coin, by giving every piece of money twice its former value. Paul quashed these

\* Valerian Zubof, brother to the favourite, commanded the army which acted in Persia. One of his couriers arrived at the moment of the death of Catharine, with the account of a battle. Paul sent him ribands of the order of St. Anne to distribute among his officers, and to each of the colonels a private order to lead their regiments to the frontiers. The general remained behind in his camp, without knowing what he was to do. He afterwards followed his army, and on his arrival at Petersburg gave in his resignation, and went to reside in Courland, where he possessed almost the entire domains of the ancient dukes.

† This scheme of Catharine is incontrovertible: she resolved to drive the king of Prussia back to the borders of the Rhine with her cannon. To make him feel the absolute necessity of returning to the coalition, she fomented revolts in Prussia, at Dantzic, and in Silesia.

‡ At this juncture they fell sixty per cent.



two disastrous measures, which had already begun to be carried into execution, and put the expenditure of his court upon a very economical footing. At the same time he broke off the subsidy treaty with England; not that it was his intention, as had been published abroad, to acknowledge the French republic, but because his imperial pride was above entering into the pay of England, like a petty state.\*

Kosciusko, who had been made prisoner of war when defending his country against the attacks of foreigners, was detained as a state criminal, though he was always better treated than Ignatius Potocki, and his other companions in misfortune, who were more rigorously confined in the fortress, and at Schlussemburg. Paul gave liberty to them all, and was generous enough to go himself to deliver Kosciusko from confinement. It was interesting to see this brave man, still sick of his wounds and grief, carried to the palace, where he was introduced to the emperor and empress, to testify his gratitude to them. He was a little thin person, pale and emaciated: his head was still surrounded with bandages, and his forehead could not be seen: but his mien and his eyes still brought to remembrance what he dared attempt with such feeble means. He refused the peasants that Paul would have given him in Russia, but accepted a sum of money to go and live independent in America. This circumstance made a great and favourable impression on the public. Unquestionably it did honour to Paul; but, to appreciate his conduct on this occasion, it must be remembered that Kosciusko had personally offended not him, but the empress Catharine. Perhaps, therefore, Kosciusko was indebted for his liberty to Paul's affectation of acting contrary to his mother in every respect.

The funeral honours to be paid to the empress were another happy circumstance to engage the mind of Paul; thus suspending or interrupting the torrent of new regulations; but, what was not expected of him, he considered it as a filial duty to remove the ashes of his unfortunate father. The name of Peter III., which no one had dared to pronounce for five-and-thirty years, appeared on a sudden at the head of the ceremonial of mourning and interment; and the

\* He afterwards condescended to receive large subsidies from England.

services to be performed, and funeral honours paid to Peter and Catharine, were prescribed at the same time. On reading the *prekase*, it might have been supposed that the husband and wife had just departed together. Paul repaired to the convent of Alexander Nevsky, where the body of his father had been deposited: Causing the old monks to show him the private grave, and open the coffin in his presence, he shed tears over the sad remains that still presented themselves to his eyes. The coffin was placed on high in the middle of the church, and the same service was performed by it as by that of Catharine, which was exposed to view on a bed of state in the palace.

Paul then caused a search to be made for those officers who were attached to his father at the time of Peter's unhappy catastrophe, and who had since lived in disgrace or unknown at court. Baron Ungern Sternberg, formerly aide-de-camp to Peter III., was at once made general-in-chief, and sent for to the emperor, who ordered him to be ushered into his closet. After receiving him in the most gracious manner, he said, "Have you heard what I am doing for my father?"—"Yes, sire," answered the old general, "I have heard it with astonishment." "With astonishment! why? is it not a duty I had to fulfil? See," continued he, turning to a picture of Peter III. which was already placed in the closet,\* "I will have him to witness my gratitude towards his faithful friend." Saying these words he embraced general Ungern, and invested him with the riband of St. Alexander. The worthy old man, although he was little dazzled with this vanity, could not resist so affecting a scene, and retired with his eyes swimming in tears.

Paul then directed him to do duty by his father's body, enjoining him to provide for the ceremony the same uniform as he had worn when aide-de-camp to Peter III. Ungern was lucky enough to find such a one in the possession of an old acquaintance. Paul would see this relic; he kept it

\* "All the pictures of Peter III. had been proscribed, both in the imperial palaces and private houses. How Paul contrived to conceal this I cannot tell. Happy, at this period, he who could find one of these portraits in a lumber-room, to which it had been banished: it presently became the chief ornament of his house. The painters of Petersburg could not supply the demand for copies."—*Masson*.

himself, and it made the fortune of him who had so well preserved it. Several other officers, and among them the only one who had attempted to make any resistance in favour of Peter III. at the revolution of 1762, were found out in their retirement, and recalled to court to be loaded with favours.

These particulars are affecting, and do honour to the heart of Paul; but it appears from the answer of Ungern, that they astonished every one. Some attributed them as much to Paul's opposition to his mother as to his love for his father: and several ascribed this part of his conduct to a politic design of thus proclaiming for his father one who would not, when alive, acknowledge him for his son. The parade and ostentation with which he caused the sad remains of Peter to be disinterred, and then held up to the admiration of the public, were particularly blamed. The coffin that contained them was crowned,\* and removed in great pomp to the palace, to be exhibited there in a temple constructed for the purpose, by the side of the corpse of Catharine, with which it was afterwards to be conveyed to the citadel. Then alone did the husband and wife rest together in peace. Over the two coffins lay a kind of true-love knot, with this inscription in Russ:—"Divided in life, united in death." People came with great respect to kiss the coffin of the one and the cold and livid hand of the other; they made a genuflection, and were obliged to descend the stairs backwards. The empress, who had been badly embalmed, soon appeared quite disfigured; her hands, eyes, and lower part of her face were black, blue, and yellow. Those who had seen her only in public could not recognise her; and all the pomp with which she was still surrounded, all the riches that covered her corpse, served only to augment the horror it inspired.

If, by restoring the honours of his father, Paul might be thought by any to throw disgrace on the memory of his mother, by bringing to mind the scenes which five-and-thirty years' silence had nearly consigned to oblivion, yet the vengeance he took on some of the assassins of Peter III. possessed a degree of sublimity which was approved by all.

\* Peter III. had never been crowned, and this was the reason assigned for not burying him in the citadel with the other Russian emperors.

Count Alexis Orlof and prince Baratinski\* were compelled to stand, one on each side of the corpse of Peter, as *chief mourners*. They took their station in presence of the assembled court amid sable cloaks, black hangings, lighted tapers, and all the solemnity of imperial woe. Count Alexis, being blessed with strong nerves and much usage of the world, stood out the doleful scene; while prince Baratinski, with a heart of finer mould, fainted under the weight of grief; and it was only by the repeated application of volatile salts and other stimulants, that he could be made to support his station during the three hours appointed by the ceremonial. Count Orlof afterwards received permission, without asking for it, to visit foreign parts; and prince Baratinski was spared the trouble in future of paying his attendance at court. Passek, who owed his fortune solely to the same crime, which his very countenance seemed to call to mind, was fortunately absent from court, and survived the funeral but a few days.

“This,” says Masson, whom we have here chiefly followed, “was the conduct of Paul in the first days of his reign; and I have collected the whole of it together, lest these instances of reason, justice, and feeling should be lost and forgotten in the heap of unaccountable actions with which they were afterwards obscured.”

“The sovereign whom Paul appears to have chosen for his model,” says the same writer, “is Frederick William, father of the great king of Prussia.† The same austerity of manners, and the same passion for soldiers, are found in the Russian

\* “It happened in 1780, or thereabouts, that, after presenting some travellers at court, the English minister and his countrymen were honoured by her majesty’s conversation; during which she said, in her lively manner, and pointing to prince Baratinski, who stood pretty near her—‘Voilà un homme qui m’a rendu le plus grand service dans le moment le plus critique de ma vie.’ At hearing this, all present were filled with the utmost astonishment, as the particulars of the revolution made one of those *secrets* which everybody knows; Catharine, however, immediately added, with perfect *nonchalance*, that, in stepping out of her carriage, her foot twisted at the ankle, and if prince Baratinski had not caught her at that instant, she must have fallen on her face to the ground.”—*Castéra*.

† “This he does not allow; for he said one day, ‘I will be Frederick II. in the morning, and Louis XIV. at night.’”



autocrat. For the rest, I have drawn, I conceive, the character of Paul in relating his actions; if not, the task, I confess, is above my powers. It is well known, that nothing is so difficult to paint as an infant, whose physiognomy is as yet unsettled, and it is the same with the character of an eccentric man. The most favourable plea we can make for him is, that the light of the French revolution has touched his brain, and disordered his intellects. It had already disturbed the much stronger head of his mother. It is said, that the people of Paris, crowding to see Paul, then a youth, cried, 'My God, how ugly he is!' and that he had the good sense to laugh at it.\* He is not improved since he is grown old, bald, and wrinkled. The empress appears by his side like one of those beautiful women who are painted, with a little deformed blackamoor near them, as a contrast to their dignity and grace. The singularity which he affects in his dress, and the severity of his manners, add greatly to his deformity. Without excepting even the Kalmuks and the Kirghises, Paul is the ugliest man in his extensive dominions; and he himself considers his countenance as so shocking, that he dares not impress it upon his coin.

"I shall here subjoin some traits, which will serve to describe Paul by his own actions; and will prove, that when grand-duke, he announced what we have seen of him since his accession.

"Near his castle of Pavlofsky he had a terrace, from which he could see all the sentinels, whom he delighted to station about him wherever there was room for a sentry-box. On this covered terrace he spent a part of each day, and observed with a spy-glass all that was passing about him. Often he sent a servant to a sentinel, to order him to button or unbutton a little more of his coat, to keep his musket higher or lower, to walk at a greater or less distance from his sentry-

\* "He changed greatly after his accession; or rather, he then dared to show himself what perhaps he was already. A poor soldier, in the agony of his sufferings under the cane by Paul's orders for a trifling fault in his exercise, cried out in despair, 'Cursed bald-head! cursed bald-head!' The enraged autocrat gave orders that he should expire under the knout; and issued a proclamation, by which it was prohibited, under pain of the same punishment, for any one to make use of the term bald, in speaking of the head, or snubbed, in speaking of the nose."

box. Sometimes he would go himself nearly half a mile to give these important orders, and would cane the soldier, or put a ruble into his pocket, according as he was angry or pleased with him.

"Pavlofsky was an open village, yet guards were appointed, who wrote down the names of all who entered or went out of it, and who were obliged to tell whence they came, whither they were going, or what they wanted. Every evening each house was visited, to learn if there were any strangers there. Every man who wore a round hat, or had a dog with him, was arrested. The village, which had been much frequented because of its beautiful situation, soon became a desert; persons turned out of their way to avoid it: and when Paul was perceived at a distance, he was carefully shunned. These circumstances increased his displeasure and suspicions, and he often caused the persons, who thus sought to avoid him, to be pursued and questioned.

"One day he put all the officers of his battalion under arrest, because they had saluted him awkwardly in filing off after their drill, and he ordered them to be called out for eight days successively to file off and salute before him, sending them regularly back to the guard-house till they were able to perform according to his fancy.

"As he was one day exercising his regiment of cuirassiers, the horse of an officer threw him. Paul ran furiously towards him, crying, 'Get up, rascal.'—'Your highness, I cannot, I have broken my leg.' Paul spat upon him, and retired swearing.

"Passing at another time unexpectedly and secretly by one of his guard-houses, the officer, not knowing him, did not order out his men; upon which he instantly turned back, boxed the ears of the officer, and ordered him to be disarmed and put under arrest.

"One day, travelling from Tzarskoeselo to Gatshina, the road to which was in the middle of a marshy forest, he suddenly recollected something, and ordered the coachman to return. 'Presently, your highness,' said the coachman; 'the road is here too narrow?' 'How, rascal,' cried Paul, 'won't you turn immediately?' The coachman, instead of answering, hastened to a spot where it was possible to comply: Paul, however, called to his equerry, and ordered him to arrest and

punish the rebellious coachman. The equerry assured him that he would turn in a moment. Paul flew into a passion with the equerry also. 'You are a pitiful scoundrel like himself,' said he. 'Let him overturn the carriage, let him break my neck, but let him obey me, and turn the instant I command him.' During the dispute the coachman succeeded in turning, but Paul had him chastised on the spot.

"Since his accession, one of his horses stumbled with him in one of the streets of Petersburg: he alighted immediately, held a sort of council with his attendants, and the horse was condemned to receive fifty lashes with a whip. Paul caused them to be given on the spot, before the populace, and himself counted the strokes, saying, 'There, sir, that is for having stumbled with the emperor.'

"To balance this multitude of absurdities, he exhibited many traits of humanity: the pensions which he bestowed on the unfortunate, the hospitals which he founded for his soldiers, the provisions which he distributed among his poor officers, and other acts of benevolence and justice, attest that he deserved the character rather of a capricious than a bad man."

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## CHAPTER L.

### EARLY MEASURES OF PAUL'S REIGN CONTINUED.

THE guards, that dangerous body of men who had overturned the throne of the father, and who had long considered the accession of the son as the term of their military existence, were rendered incapable of injuring him by a bold and vigorous step, and treated without the least deference from the first day. Paul incorporated in the different regiments of guards his battalions that arrived from Gatschina,\*

\* Paul expected these battalions with evident impatience and anxiety. They marched all night, and arrived in the morning. Ratiokof, a subaltern, who had no other merit than the good fortune of announcing to him their wished-for arrival, was instantly created a knight of St. Anne, and made aide-de-camp to the grand-duke. It was not till Paul saw himself surrounded with his little army, that he began to act as he had done at Gatschina.

the officers of which he distributed among the various companies, promoting them at the same time two or three steps; so that simple lieutenants or captains in the army found themselves at once captains in the guards, a place so important and hitherto so honoured, and which gave the rank of colonel, or even of brigadier. Some of the old captains of the first families in the kingdom found themselves under the command of officers of no birth, who but a few years before had left their companies, as sergeants or corporals, to enter into the battalions of the grand-duke. This bold and hasty change, which at any other time would have been fatal to its author, had only the effect of inducing a few hundreds of officers, subalterns and others, to retire. Most of these were such as had sufficient to live upon beside their commissions, or could neither digest the putting others over their heads, nor support the harassing discipline which the intruders were about to establish.\* Many of these young officers, however, felt no other grievance than that of being obliged to quit their brilliant uniforms, and to alter their dress according to that of the battalions which had so long excited their ridicule.

\* Of these obtruded officers, no one made his fortune so rapidly as Arakteheief, who had been recommended, seven years before, to the grand-duke, when he wished to form a company of artillery at Pavlofsky. Arakteheief, who had been brought up in the corps of cadets, had made himself noticed by his progress, and particularly by the ardour and passionate zeal he displayed for the minutiae of discipline. In spite of his indefatigable attentions, severity, and exactness in the service, it was some time before he could establish himself thoroughly in the good opinion of Paul. Several pretty fireworks, which he executed for the entertainments at Pavlofsky, but, above all, the rage for exercising with which he burned, and which induced him to harass the soldiers day and night, at length gained him the favour of the grand-duke. At Paul's accession to the throne, Arakteheief was created a major in the guards, with the rank of general, and appointed military governor of Petersburg. He received the military order of St. Anne, with some thousands of peasants, and became the emperor's right-hand, as he was afterwards that of Alexander. Never was pindaric poet more imperiously tormented by his muse than this man was possessed by his military demon. His fury and his cane cost more than one unfortunate soldier his life, even under the eye of Paul. He revived a barbarity which was no longer known in the Russian service; he abused and struck the very officers when exercising.



Paul, alarmed and enraged at this general desertion, went to the barracks, flattered the soldiers, appeased the officers, and endeavoured to retain them by excluding from all employ, civil and military, those who should retire in future. He afterwards issued an order, that every officer or subaltern who had resigned, or should give in his resignation, should quit the capital within four-and-twenty hours, and return to his own home. It did not enter into the head of the person who drew up the ukase that it contained an absurdity; for several of the officers were natives of Petersburg, and had families residing in the city. Accordingly, some of them retired to their homes without quitting the capital, not obeying the first part of the order, lest they should be found guilty of disobedience to the second. Arkarof, who was to see it put in force, having informed the emperor of this contradiction, he directed that the injunction to quit Petersburg should alone be obeyed. A number of young men were consequently taken out of their houses as criminals, put out of the city, with orders not to re-enter it, and left in the road without shelter, and without any furred garments, in very severe weather. Those who belonged to very remote provinces, for the most part wanting money to carry them thither, wandered about the neighbourhood of Petersburg, where several perished from cold and want.

These measures were extended to all the officers of the army; and those on the staff as generals were equally obliged to join their regiments or resign, because these staffs were abolished. By this impolitic step Paul pretended to commence a reform, and gain the army. But what soon showed that in becoming emperor he by no means renounced the military trifles which had alone occupied his time as grand-duke, was his devoting all his attention, from the morning of his ascending the throne, to the frivolous changes which he wished to introduce into the dress and exercise of the soldiers. For a moment the palace had the appearance of a place taken by assault by foreign troops; those who began to mount guard there differing so much in dress and style from those who had been seen there the day before. He went down into the court, where he was manœuvring his soldiers three or four hours, to teach them to mount guard after his fashion, and establish his *wacht parade* (guard parade), which be-

came the most important institution and central point of his government. Every day he dedicated the same time to it, however cold it might be. There, in a plain deep green uniform, jack-boots, and a large hat, he spent his mornings in exercising his guards; there he gave his orders, received reports, published his favours, rewards, and punishments; and there every officer had to be presented to him as he stood, surrounded by his sons and aides-de-camp, stamping his heels on the pavement to keep himself warm, his bald head bare, his nose cocked up, one hand behind his back, and with the other raising and sinking his cane in due time, and crying, *Raz, dva; raz, dva; one, two; one, two.* He prided himself in braving a cold of fifteen or twenty degrees of Reaumur without furs. After this, none of the officers dared any longer appear in pelisses; and the old generals, tormented with coughs, gout, and rheumatism, were obliged to form a circle round Paul, dressed like himself.

The finances of the empire, exhausted by the prodigalities, and still more by the waste of Catharine's reign, required a prompt remedy; and to this Paul seemed at first to turn his thoughts. Partly from hope, partly from fear, the paper money of the crown rose a little in value. It was to be supposed that the grand-duke of all the Russias, who for thirty years had been obliged to live on an income of a hundred thousand rubles (10,000*l.*) per annum, would at least have learned economy per force; but he was soon seen to rush into the most unmeasured sumptuousness, heap wealth upon some, and lavish favours upon others, with as much profusion as his mother, and with still less discernment. The spoils of Poland continued to add to the riches of men already too wealthy.\* All he could do towards restoring a sort of equi-

\* "I am informed that the emperor, on his coronation, among other gratuities, distributed 82,000 *souls* among a score of people; that is to say, that he made presents of tracts of lands inhabited and cultivated by 82,000 male slaves, for in Russia a woman is not a soul yet. By these donations the emperor cedes the private rights which he claims over these wretched beings, and the lands they are obliged to cultivate, reserving to himself only the sovereignty. Now if we suppose the *slave-soul*, or peasant, to bring the *body*, or gentleman who possesses it, only seven rubles clear per annum, which is a very moderate computation, it follows that the emperor has given away so much of the domains of the crown as would produce a neat income of 574,000 rubles

librium between his receipts and disbursements, was to lay an exorbitant tax on all the classes of his slaves. The poll-tax of the wretched serfs was doubled, and a new tax was imposed upon the nobles, which, however, the serfs would ultimately have to pay.

After the first impressions which his accession caused in the heart of Paul, punishments and disgraces succeeded with the same rapidity and profusion with which he had lavished his favours. Several experienced the two extremes in a few days. It is true that most of these punishments at first appeared just; but then it must be allowed, that Paul could scarcely strike any but the guilty, so corrupt had been all who were about the throne.

Notwithstanding the assurances he had given Zubof, one of the first orders that followed was to seal up his office and that of Markof, and to turn their officers and secretaries out of court with disgrace. One Tersky, master of requests and reporter to the senate, who publicly sold justice to the highest bidder, was at first gratified with an order of knighthood, and obtained some lands, which he said the late empress had promised him a few days before her decease; next morning he was dismissed from his offices. Samoilof, the attorney-general, whom likewise he had honourably confirmed in his office, with a present of four thousand peasants, amounting in value to more than twenty thousand rubles (2000*l.*) a year, was displaced a few days after, put under arrest, and his secretary was sent to the fortress. The only ministers who retained their places were Besborodko, Nicholas Soltikof, and Arkarof.

This wavering and uncertain conduct which characterised the first steps of Paul, clearly proves that his favours were the effects of policy; and the disgraces that followed them were to be ascribed to passion rather than to justice. But what confounded all who had admired him, was to see him the very morning of his accession, at the moment when he

(57,400*l.*), which, considering the nature of the property, is a capital beyond estimation. Catharine, by her profusion in this way, had nearly disposed of all her domains; but the confiscated estates and starosties in Poland constitute the fund to which the present emperor has recourse. It need not be mentioned that a population of 82,000 males in Russia or Poland must occupy an immense district."—*Masson*.

entered such an intricate labyrinth of business and abuses, the importance of which to the state should have occupied him at least some days, applying himself with the utmost eagerness to the most trifling details of military service. The shape of a hat, the colour of a feather, the altitude of a grenadier's cap, boots, spatterdashes, cockades, queues, and sword-belts, were the grave affairs that absorbed his astonishing activity. He was surrounded by patterns of accoutrements and uniforms of all kinds. The greatest proof of zeal and merit any one could give during the first days of his reign, was to appear before him in the new uniform he had introduced. An officer who could give his tailor a hundred rubles to have a dress of the new fashion made in a few hours, and appear in it next morning in the *wacht parade*, was almost certain of obtaining some post, or at least a cross. Several had no other merit, and employed no other means to gain the good graces of their new emperor.\*

Another whim, which caused no little surprise, was the imperial prohibition of wearing round hats, or rather the sudden order to take them away, or tear them to pieces on the heads of those who appeared in them. This occasioned some disgraceful scenes in the streets, and particularly near the palace. The Cossacks and soldiers of the police fell on the passengers to uncover their heads, and beat those who, not knowing the reason, attempted to defend themselves. An English merchant, going through the street in a sledge, was thus stopped, and his hat snatched off. Supposing it to be a robbery, he leaped out of his sledge, knocked down the soldier, and called the guard. Instead of the guard, arrived an officer, who overpowered and bound him; but as they were carrying him before the police, he was fortunate enough to meet the coach of the English minister, who was going to court, and claimed his protection.† Sir Charles Whitworth

\* General Meyendorf being mentioned to him as a good officer of horse, he despatched a courier to him; and Meyendorf, in his eagerness to obey the command, presented himself at the parade in his ancient uniform. Paul, enraged, uttered some severe reproaches to those who had recommended such a man, called him one of *Potemkin's soldiers*, and banished him to his estate.

† Another Englishman was met by an officer of the police, who took from him his round hat. The Englishman, folding his arms, and sur-



made his complaint to the emperor; who conjecturing that a round hat might be the national dress of the English as it was of the Swedes,\* said, that his order had been misconceived, and he would explain himself more fully to Arkarof. The next day it was published in the streets and houses, that strangers who were not in the emperor's service, or naturalised, were not comprised in the prohibition. Round hats were now no longer pulled off; but those who were met with this unlucky head-dress were conducted to the police to ascertain their country. If they were found to be Russians, they were sent for soldiers; and woe to a Frenchman who had been met with in this dress, for he would have been condemned as a Jacobin.† It was reported to Paul, that the *chargé d'affaires* of the king of Sardinia, indulging himself in raillery at this singular proscription of round hats, said, that such trifles had often been on the point of occasioning seditions in Italy. The *chargé-d'affaires* received orders, through Arkarof, to quit the city in twenty-four hours. Thanks to distance and the situation of the king of Sardinia, he could not demand an explanation of such an insult, otherwise round hats might have become the motive of a war between two monarchs.‡

A regulation equally incomprehensible, was the sudden prohibition of harnessing horses after the Russian mode. A

veying him from head to foot, said, with a look of compassion, "Ah, friend! how I pity thee for being a Russian!"

\* It was likewise the national hat of the Russians, a little difference in the crown excepted, which it was well to be apprised of, as it prevented the wearer from insult. The hatters' shops being soon emptied of cocked hats, those who had neither time nor means to procure one, cocked up their little round hats with pins, that they might walk the streets with safety.

† Perhaps the reader may suppose that these round hats were considered as some party sign. By no means; it was a singular aversion which Paul had for them; and he had declared war against them at Pavlofsky four years before.

‡ It was fortunate that it did not happen to the Swedish or Prussian ambassador. The latter, however, fell into disgrace with Paul for a motive equally noble. The emperor gave out that the hat, the tail, the bag, the spatterdashes, and the sword behind the back, were in the Prussian mode. M. von Tauenziehn appeared to protest against the fidelity of the translation, by coming to court in a more modern and more elegant uniform. This was the crime for which Paul demanded his recal.

fortnight was allowed for procuring harness in the German fashion; after the expiration of which, the police were ordered to cut the traces of every carriage the horses of which were harnessed in the ancient manner. As soon as this regulation was made public, several persons dared not venture abroad, still less appear in their carriages near the palace, for fear of being insulted. The harness-makers availed themselves of the occasion to charge exorbitant prices. To dress the *ishvoshtshki*, or Russian coachmen, in the German fashion, was attended with another inconvenience. Most of them would neither part with their long beards, their kaftans, nor their round hats; still less would they tie a false tail to their short hair, which produced the most ridiculous scenes and figures in the world. At length the emperor had the vexation to be obliged to change his rigorous order into a simple invitation to his subjects gradually to adopt the German fashion of dress, if they wished to merit his favour.

Another reform with respect to carriages: the great number of splendid equipages that swarmed in the streets of Petersburg disappeared in an instant. The officers, even the generals, came to the parade on foot, or in little sledges, which also was not without its dangers.\*

It was anciently a point of etiquette for every person who met a Russian autocrat, his wife, or son, to stop his horse or coach, alight, and prostrate himself in the snow or in the mud.† This barbarous homage, difficult to be paid in a large city where carriages pass in great numbers, and always on the gallop, had been completely abolished under the reign of the polished Catharine. One of the first cares of Paul was to re-establish it in all its rigour. A general officer, who passed on without his coachman's observing the emperor riding by on horseback, was stopped, and immediately put under arrest.‡

\* An officer, walking the streets in a large pelisse, had given his servant his sword, which incommoded him, intending to put it on again, and to take off his pelisse, when he got near the palace. Unfortunately, before this took place the emperor met him, and in consequence he was reduced to the ranks, and his servant made an officer in his place.

† Peter I. ordered those who prostrated themselves before him in this manner to be caned, and even caned them himself.

‡ When his sword was returned him, he refused to take it, saying, that it was a gold-hilted sword received from the empress, with the

The same unpleasant circumstance occurred to several others, so that nothing was so much dreaded, either on foot or in a carriage, as the meeting of the emperor.

The ceremony established within the palace became equally strict, and equally dreaded. Woe betide him who, when permitted to kiss the hand of Paul, did not make the floor resound by striking it with his knee as loud as a soldier with the butt-end of his firelock. It was requisite, too, that the salute of the lips on his hand should be heard, to certify the reality of the kiss, as well as of the genuflection. Prince George Galitzin, the chamberlain, was put under arrest on the spot by his majesty himself, for having made the bow and kissed the hand too negligently.\*

Another of Paul's first regulations was a strict injunction to all tradesmen to efface from the front of their shops the French word *magasin*, and substitute the Russian word *lavka* (shop); assigning as a reason, that the emperor alone could have magazines of wood, flour, corn, &c.; while a tradesman ought not to be above his condition, but stick to his shop.

It would be tedious to report all the ordinances of similar weight and importance that succeeded each other in the course of one week.† Frequently these new regulations contradicted or frustrated one another, and what was ordained one day was often obliged to be modified or annulled the next. In a word, we may say that Paul, when he wrapped

privilege of its never being taken from him. Paul sent for him, returned the sword to him himself, and said that he had resolved to make an example, and had no particular ill-will towards him; at the same time, he ordered him to repair immediately to the army.

\* Paul, when grand-duke, had a great predilection for etiquette. Being once at Montbelliard, he suddenly took by the arm a young officer of his suite, who was playing at cards, and turning him out of the room, he said to those who were playing with the officer, "Gentlemen, that young coxcomb is not of a proper rank to make one of your party." At the court balls, the dancers were obliged to twist themselves every possible way, that they might not turn their backs upon him when dancing, wherever he might happen to be.

† He subsequently issued different ukases, prohibiting the wearing of frock coats, waistcoats without sleeves, and pantaloons. He had forbade the academy to use the word *revolution* when speaking of the course of the stars; and enjoined the players to employ the word *permission* instead of *liberty*, which they had been accustomed to put in their bills. He also forbade the manufacture of any tri-colored ribands or stuffs whatever.

himself in the imperial mantle, let the grand-duke peep out; that he thought to govern a vast empire as he had governed his Pavlofsky; his capital, like his house; and thirty millions of men of all ranks and all nations, like a score of lacqueys.

Of all the unforeseen changes which Paul introduced without any preparation, those which he made in the army were the most extensive and the most impolitic. Unquestionably, there was room for great reforms in the military department; but all he was capable of doing was to multiply irregular promotions, increase a staff already too numerous, and alter uniforms, ranks, terms, and titles. "The Russian army," says Masson, "offered a pattern to be followed in the beauty, simplicity, and convenience of its dress, equally adapted to the climate and to the genius of the country." But this was now changed for the ancient dress of Germany, which the Russian soldier abominated; his fair locks, which he loved to wash every morning, he had now to bedaub with grease and flour; and he had to spend an hour in buttoning his black spatterdashes, which he cursed for pinching his legs. When Suvarof received orders to establish these novelties, with little sticks for models of the soldiers' tails and side-curls, he said, "Hair-powder is not gunpowder; curls are not cannon; and tails are not bayonets." This sarcasm, which is not destitute of wit, and forms in the Russian language a sort of apophthegm in rhyme, soon spread from mouth to mouth through the army, and was the true reason that induced Paul to recal Suvarof, and dismiss him from the service.

It was the same with the changes which he made in civil affairs. His wish was to alter, not to improve. For anything to have subsisted under the reign of his mother, was a sufficient reason why it should cease under him. All the tribunals, all the governments of the empire, were remodelled, and their seats changed. That which had been consecrated by its name (Ekaterinoslaf) to the glory of Catharine was abolished.\* It is easy to imagine the con-

\* There was nothing so trifling to which Paul did not descend, to show disrespect to his mother's memory. The persons belonging to her wore rings, on which the date of her decease was enamelled. The emperor expressed his dissatisfaction at it; and they were obliged to wear rings with the motto, *Paul consoles me*.



fusion, injustice, wretchedness, and ruin, that such changes of places must have produced in Russia; more than twenty thousand gentlemen were thrown out of employ.

If this new reign was fatal to the army and to the poor gentry, it was still more so to the unhappy peasantry. A report being spread that Paul was about to restrict the power of masters over their slaves, and give the peasants of the lords the same advantages as those of the crown, the people of the capital were much pleased with the hopes of this change. At this juncture an officer set off for his regiment, which lay at Oremberg. On the road he was asked about the new emperor, and what new regulations he was making. He related what he had seen, and what he had heard; among the rest, mentioning the ukase which was soon to appear in favour of the peasants. At this news, those of Tver and Novgorod indulged in some tumultuous actions, which were considered as symptoms of rebellion. Their masters were violently enraged with them; and the cause that had led them into error was discovered. Marshal Repnin was immediately despatched at the head of some troops against the insurgents; and the officer who had unwittingly given rise to this false hope, by retailing the news of the city on his road, was soon brought back in confinement. The senate of Petersburg judged him deserving of death, and condemned him to be broken, to undergo the punishment of the knout, and if he survived this, to labour in the mines. The emperor confirmed the sentence. This was the first criminal trial that was laid before the public; and assuredly it justified but too well those remains of shame which had before kept secret similar outrages.

The most prominent of Paul's eccentricities was that mania which, from his childhood, he displayed for the military dress and exercise. This passion in a prince no more indicates the general or the hero than a girl's fondness for dressing and undressing her doll foretokens that she will be a good mother. Frederick the Great, the most accomplished soldier of his time, is well known to have had from his boyhood the most insuperable repugnance to all those minutiae of a corporal to which his father would have subjected him; this was even the first source of that disagreement which ever subsisted between the father and the son.

Frederick, however, became a hero; his father was never anything more than a corporal. Peter III. pushed his soldato-mania to a ridiculous point, fancying he made Frederick his model. He loved soldiers and arms, as a man loves horses and dogs. He knew nothing but how to exercise a regiment, and never went abroad but in a captain's uniform. This Peter III. at the head of a regiment so well drilled by himself, had not the courage to face a young woman who marched to meet him with a few companies of the very same guards who were totally ignorant of the Prussian exercise. He lost both his crown and his life without daring to defend them.

Paul, in his mode of life when grand-duke, and his conduct after his accession, so strongly resembled his father, that, changing names and dates, the history of the one might be taken for that of the other. Both were educated in a perfect ignorance of business, and resided at a distance from court, where they were treated as prisoners of state rather than heirs to the crown; and whenever they presented themselves, appeared as aliens and strangers, having no concern with the royal family. The aunt of the father (Elizabeth) acted precisely as did the mother of the son. The endeavours of each were directed to prolong the infancy of their heirs, and to perpetuate the feebleness of their minds. The young princes were both distinguished by personal vivacity and mental insensibility, by an activity which, untrained and neglected, degenerated into turbulence; the father was sunk in debauchery, the son lost in the most insignificant trifles. An unconquerable aversion to study and reflection gave to both that infatuated taste for military parade, which would probably have displayed itself less forcibly in Paul had he been a witness of the ridicule they attached to Peter. The education of Paul, however, was much more attended to than that of his father. He was surrounded in infancy by persons of merit, and his youth promised a capacity of no ordinary kind. It must also be allowed that he was exempt from many of the vices which disgraced Peter; temperance and regularity of manners were prominent features of his character—features the more commendable, as before his mother and himself they were rarely to be found in a Russian autocrat. To the same cause, education, and his knowledge of the

language and character of the nation, it was owing that he differed from his father in other valuable qualities.

The similarity which, in some instances, marked their conduct towards their wives, is still more striking; and in their amours, a singular coincidence of taste is observable. Catharine and Marie were the most beautiful women of the court, yet both failed to gain the affections of their husbands. Catharine had an ambitious soul, a cultivated mind, and the most amiable and polished manners. In a man, however, whose attachments were confined to soldiers, to the pleasures of the bottle, and the fumes of tobacco, she excited no other sentiment than disgust and aversion. He was smitten with an object less respectable, and less difficult to please. The countess Vorontzof, fat, ugly in her person and vulgar in her manners, was more suitable to his depraved military taste, and she became his mistress.\* In like manner, the regular beauty of Marie, the unalterable sweetness of her disposition, her unwearied complaisance, her docility as a wife, and her tenderness as a mother, were not sufficient to prevent Paul from attaching himself to Mademoiselle Nelidof, whose disposition and qualities better accorded with his own, and afterwards to a young lady of the name of Lapukhin, who, it is believed, rejected his suit. To the honour of Paul it is related that he submitted to that mortifying repulse with the most chivalric patience and generosity. Nelidof was ugly and diminutive, but seemed desirous, by her wit and address, to compensate for the disadvantages of her person; for a woman to be in love with Paul it was necessary she should resemble him.

On their accession to the throne, neither the father nor the son were favourites with the court or the nation, yet both acquired immediate popularity and favour. The first steps of Paul appeared to be directed, but improved, by those of Peter. The liberation of Kosciusko and other prisoners brought to public recollection the recal of Biren, Munich, and Lestocq, with this difference, that Peter III. did not disgrace these acts of clemency and justice by ridiculous violences, or by odious and groundless persecutions. Both

\* She got drunk with him, and swore like a trooper: she squinted, and spat when she was talking.

issued ukases extremely favourable to the nobility, but from motives essentially different, and little to the honour of the son. The father granted to the Russian gentry those natural rights which every man ought to enjoy; while the son attempted the folly of creating a heraldic nobility in Russia, where that Gothic institution had never been known. In the conduct which he observed towards the clergy, Paul, however, showed himself a superior politician. Instead of insulting the priests, and obliging them to shave their beards, he bestowed the orders of the empire on the bishops, to put them on a footing with the nobility, and flattered the populace and the priesthood by founding churches, in obedience to pretended inspiration.

In his military operations, however, his policy appears to have abandoned him, because here he gave the reins to his ruling passion. The quick and total change of discipline he introduced in his armies, created him nearly as many enemies as there were officers and soldiers. In the distrust and suspicions which incessantly haunted him, his inferiority to his father is also evident. One of the first acts of Peter III. was to abolish the political inquisition established by Elizabeth; whereas Paul prosecuted no scheme with greater alacrity than that of establishing a system of spies, and devising means for the encouragement of informers. The blind confidence of the father was his ruin, but it flowed from a humanity of disposition always worthy of respect. The distrust of the son did not save him; it was the offspring of a timorous mind, which by its suspicions was more apt to provoke than to elude treason.



## CHAPTER LI.

## THE SECOND COALITION—CAMPAIGN IN ITALY AND SWITZERLAND.

WHATEVER had been Paul's motives for recalling the 60,000 troops which had marched under Suvarof as far as Galicia, on their way to assail the French republicans, intense abhorrence of the latter was one of the few points in which there was a complete coincidence of sentiment between Catharine and her son. He gave an asylum to Louis XVIII. in the capital of Courland, and behaved with munificence to the emigrants who sought refuge in his dominions—but always on condition that they did not offend him by their costume, and that they were punctual in their religious exercises. Paul ordered all the strangers who were in Russia to profess the religion in which they had been brought up. Thus the Catholics were enjoined strict observance of the rites and commands of the Romish church. An ukase in all the different languages was posted up, enjoining every one of them, under pain of being treated as rebels, not to defer the holy sacrament of penance, and to prepare themselves for receiving the host at Easter: at the same time the priests were ordered to give absolution only to such as should merit it. The Catholic church, which had before been empty, was now crowded: and the priests belonging to it, French, Germans, Italians, and Poles, took their seats in their confessionals. Before every confessional a box was set up, into which the penitent was obliged to drop a card, containing his name, profession, and abode; and every evening these cards were carried to the emperor. The person confessed then received a ticket of absolution, signed by the priest, which admitted him to the communion table. This ticket was likewise a card of security to him, which he produced, when requisite, before the police. Innkeepers and house-owners were directed to see these orders carried into execution with respect to persons lodging in their houses, and to inform against such as did not frequent the churches, or who wore pantaloons,

round hats, or lapelled waistcoats. The sick were charitably informed that they might require the confessor to attend them at home; and the poor, that the host should be carried to them gratis.

We may easily conceive the embarrassment of most of the French, who before this had lived in Russia as free as possible with regard to religious opinions, of which the government took no notice. It was necessary to submit, however. These emigrants, who were represented to Paul as libertines, were obliged to go regularly to mass, walking two by two, between a double row of Russian soldiers. Such Catholics as were in easy circumstances soon found means of obtaining tickets of absolution, even without confessing. The priests sold them at first for fifty rubles (5*l.*), then twenty-five, and at last for ten rubles (1*l.*) a piece, agreeing to throw the cards into the box themselves into the bargain.\*

Lord Whitworth, the English ambassador, who had induced the emperor Paul to sign a treaty of commerce with England,

\* A scene that passed near this Catholic church deserves notice here. Paul caused a service to be celebrated in honour of the duke of Wurtemberg, father of the empress, who had just died at Stutgard. As it was not in character for him to be present at this mass, he resolved to place himself at the head of the grenadiers, who encompassed the church, to maintain order. It was extremely cold, and his horse, a native no doubt of a warmer climate, could not remain motionless. Weary of bridling, wheeling, and making useless efforts to keep him still, he began to gallop through the street, passing and repassing before the troops, and a great crowd of people, whom the funeral ceremony and the emperor's attendance had attracted. As Paul came galloping on, the crowd took off their hats and bowed themselves. A group assembled on the green bridge, more than four hundred paces from the spot, at length put on their hats on account of the coldness of the weather and the distance. Paul spied it, and ordered them immediately to be surrounded by the troops, and sent to the House of Correction. There were fifty or sixty persons of various conditions: they who were not nobles were whipped three successive days, men and women alike, the nobles were degraded, and such as were officers were turned into the ranks as common soldiers. Some time after, Paul ordered the corpse of the unfortunate king of Poland to be interred in the same church. He came himself to examine the funeral decorations, and the preparations for the ceremony. An upholsterer, employed on the occasion, was at the top of a ladder, dressed in a jacket and pantaloons to work more commodiously. Paul, being informed he was a Frenchman, named Leroux, ordered him to come down, and immediately commanded him to be bastinadoed in the midst of the church.

afterwards prevailed upon him to become the champion of German interests. The emperor accordingly issued his orders to his ambassador in Vienna to interpose in favour of the maintenance of the integrity of Bavaria, which had been guaranteed by Russia at the peace of Teschen. Immediately afterwards, the unexampled demands which the representatives of France made upon Germany at the congress of Rastadt, and Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt, served to fill up the measure of indignation in the mind of the autocratical and knightly Paul. He published a declaration, which was really equivalent to the proclamation of a crusade against France, and announced that he was ready, with all the force of his arms and resources of his empire, to assist in restoring the old relations amongst the European states, which had been violently disturbed by the French.

During the negotiations preliminary to the second coalition against the French, the latter, by the occupation of Malta, had furnished the Russians with an apparently just reason for taking up the cause of the knights; and by Bonaparte's descent upon Egypt, they compelled the sultan to throw himself into the arms of his hereditary foes, the Russians. As to Malta, the emperor of Russia, as grand prince of the order of St. John, had warmly espoused its cause. After his accession, he restored the grand priorate of Poland, considerably increased the revenues of the order, with a view to establish a Russian branch, and distributed its dignities, revenues, and crosses with a liberal hand. As soon as the news of the capitulation of the grand-master reached Russia, all the knights who were then within the empire issued a protest. In the name of the Russian grand priorate they declared Ferdinand von Hompesch and his companions to be traitors, and appealed to the protection of the emperor of Russia. To that appeal he responded by causing the knights then present in Russia, in their own names, and in those of their absent brethren, to elect himself, a schismatic and a married man, as grand-master, which dignity he solemnly accepted on the 13th of November, 1798.

From this time forth the Turks drew closer to the English and Russians, and entered into a common alliance with those two powers to drive the French from their possessions in the Ionian Sea and from Egypt. Negotiations were mutually

carried on between the Austrians and Russians, and an auxiliary treaty was concluded with Naples on the 29th of November, 1798, and with England on the 29th (18th) of December of the same year, the latter agreeing to an immediate advance of 225,000*l.*, and to pay a monthly subsidy of 75,000*l.* for the 45,000 men who were to be furnished by the emperor. Up till the very moment in which the treaty was concluded, hopes were entertained of being able to draw Prussia into the alliance, and in this case the 45,000 Russians were to join the Prussians. This negotiation, however, having failed, a second treaty was concluded on the 29th of June, 1799, according to which the 45,000 men were to be employed wheresoever England should see fit to determine. On the 2nd of January, 1799, England became a party to the treaty between the Porte and Russia.

A few days after the battle of Magnano, Suvarof arrived on the Mincio with the first division of his forces, twenty thousand strong, and took the command of all the allied troops in Italy. The jealousy of the Austrian generals was naturally excited, and they called a council of war, in order to examine his plans. The members of the council, beginning at the youngest, proposed their several schemes. Suvarof quietly heard them all, and when they had done, took a slate, drew two lines, and said, "Here, gentlemen, are the French, and here the Russians; the latter will march against the former and beat them." So saying, he rubbed out the French line, and added, "This is all my plan; the council is concluded."

Suvarof kept his word, and in less than three months swept the French entirely out of Lombardy and Piedmont. Thrusting himself between the three French armies of Switzerland, Northern Italy, and the Parthenopæan republic, it was his purpose, in concert with the archduke Charles of Austria, to penetrate into France on its most defenceless side, by the Vosges and the Jura, the same quarter on which the great invasion of 1814 was afterwards effected. The campaign opened on the 25th of April, on the steep banks of the Adda, behind which Moreau had posted his diminished force of 28,000 men in three divisions. The passage was forced with immense loss to the French, who were compelled to abandon Milan, which Suvarof entered in triumph on the



29th. After a week's delay, during which all the principal places of Lombardy surrendered to the allies, Suvarof followed Moreau's retreat, and endeavoured to dislodge him from his advantageous position on the Po. Not succeeding in this attempt as rapidly as suited his impetuous habits, the Russian general suddenly changed his purpose, and advanced against Turin, whilst Moreau at the same moment had resolved to retire to Turin and the crests of the Apennines, in order to preserve his communications with France. On the 27th of May, Vukassovitch, who commanded the advanced guard of the Russians, surprised Turin, and forced the French to take refuge in the citadel, leaving in the hands of the victors nearly 300 pieces of artillery, 60,000 muskets, and an enormous quantity of ammunition and military stores. Moreau's army thus deprived of all its resources, was saved from destruction only by the extraordinary ability of its commander, who led it safely towards Genoa by a mountain path, which was rendered practicable for artillery, in four days. With the exception of a few fortresses, nothing now remained to the French of all Napoleon's conquests in Northern Italy; they had been lost in less time than it had taken to make them.

Exulting in the brilliant success of his arms, Paul bestowed another surname, *Italienski*, or the Italian, on his victorious general, and ordered by an express ukase that Suvarof should be universally regarded as the greatest commander that had ever appeared. Meanwhile the results of his skill and vigour were neutralised by the selfish policy of the Austrian court, which had become by the treaty of Campo Formio, and the acquisition of Venice, in some degree an actual accomplice with the aggressors against whom it was in arms. Suvarof was compelled to submit to the dictation of the emperor Francis I., and deeply disgusted, he declared that he was no longer of any use in Italy, and that he desired nothing so ardently as to be recalled.\*

\* Suvarof's correspondence is filled with bitter complaints against the Austrians. A Russian officer of his staff wrote at this juncture to count Rostopshin at St. Petersburg: "Our glorious operations are thwarted by those very persons who are most interested in their success. Far from applauding the brilliant triumph of our arms, the cursed cabinet of Vienna seeks only to retard their march. It insists that our great Suvarof should divide his army, and direct it at once to

The disasters of the French in Upper Italy were fatal to their ascendancy in the south, and Macdonald received orders to abandon the Parthenopæan republic, and unite his forces with those of Moreau. His retreat was exposed to great dangers by the universal insurrection of the peasants; but he accomplished it with great rapidity and skill. The two French commanders then concerted measures to dislodge the allies from their conquests; a project which seemed not unlikely to be fulfilled, so obstinately had the Aulic council adhered to the old system of dispersing the troops all over the territory which they occupied. Though the allies had above a hundred thousand men in the field, they could hardly assemble thirty thousand at any one point; and Macdonald might easily have destroyed them in detail could he have fallen upon them at once; but the time he spent in reorganising his army in Tuscany, and in concerting measures with Moreau, was well employed by Suvarof in promptly concentrating his forces. Macdonald advanced against him with an army of thirty-seven thousand men, taking Modena on his way, and driving Hohenzollern out of it after a bloody engagement. The two armies met on the Trebbia, where a first and indecisive action took place on the 17th of June; it was renewed on each of the two following days, and victory finally remained with the Russians. In this terrible battle of three days, the most obstinately contested and bloody that had occurred since the beginning of the war, the loss on both sides was excessive; that of the French was above twelve thousand in killed and wounded, and that of the allies not much less. But nearly equal losses told with very

several points, which will save Moreau from total destruction. That cabinet which fears a too rapid conquest of Italy from designs which it dares not avow, as it knows well those of our magnanimous emperor, has, by the Aulic council, forced the archduke Charles into a state of inactivity, and enjoined our incomparable chief to secure his conquests rather than extend them; and the army is to waste its time and strength in the siege of fortresses which would fall of themselves if the French army were destroyed. What terrifies them even more than the rapidity of our conquests, is the generous project, openly announced, of restoring to every one what he has lost. Deceived by his ministers, the emperor Francis has, with his own hand, written to our illustrious general to pause in a career of conquest, the very rapidity of which filled him with alarm."—*Hardenberg*, vii. 249.

unequal severity on the respective combatants ; those of the allies would speedily be retrieved by large reinforcements, but the republicans had expended their last resources, were cut off from Moreau, and had no second army to fall back upon. Macdonald with infinite difficulty regained the positions he had occupied before the advance to the Trebbia, after losing an immense number of prisoners.

The fall of the citadel of Turin on the 20th of June was of great importance to the allies ; for besides disengaging their besieging force, it put into their hands one of the strongest fortresses in Piedmont, and an immense quantity of artillery and ammunition. This event, and Suvarof's victory on the Trebbia, checked the successful operations of Moreau, and compelled him to fall back to his former defensive position on the Apennines. Again, contrary to Suvarof's wishes, the allied forces were divided for the purpose of reducing Mantua and Alexandria, and occupying Tuscany. After the fall of those two fortresses, Suvarof laid siege to Tortona, when Joubert, who had meanwhile superseded Moreau, marched against him at the head of the combined forces of the French. On the 15th of August, another desperate battle was fought at Novi, in which Joubert was killed, but from which neither side derived any material advantage. The French returned to their former positions, and the Italian campaign was ended.

Suvarof now received orders to join his forces with those under Korsakof, who was on the Upper Rhine with thirty thousand men. The archduke Charles might, even without this fresh reinforcement, have already annihilated Massena had he not remained for three months, from June to August, in complete inactivity ; at the very moment of Suvarof's expected arrival, he allowed the important passes of the St. Gothard to be again carried by a coup-de-main by the French, under general Lecourbe, who drove the Austrians from the Simplon, the Furca, the Grimsel, and the Devil's Bridge. The archduke, after an unsuccessful attempt to push across the Aar at Dettingen, suddenly quitted the scene of war and advanced down the Rhine for the purpose of supporting the English expedition under the duke of York against Holland. This unexpected turn in affairs proceeded from Vienna. The Viennese cabinet was jealous of Russia.

Suvarof played the master in Italy, favoured Sardinia at the expense of the house of Habsburg, and deprived the Austrians of the laurels and the advantages they had won. The archduke, accordingly, received orders to remain inactive, to abandon the Russians, and finally to withdraw to the north; by this movement Suvarof's triumphant progress was checked, he was compelled to cross the Alps to the aid of Korsakof, and to involve himself in a mountain warfare ill-suited to the habits of his soldiery.

Korsakof, whom Bavaria had been bribed with Russian gold to furnish with a corps one thousand strong, was solely supported by Kray and Hotze with twenty thousand men. Massena, taking advantage of the departure of the archduke and the non-arrival of Suvarof, crossed the Limmat at Dietikon and shut Korsakof, who had imprudently stationed himself with his whole army in Zurich, so closely in, that, after an engagement that lasted two days, from the 15th to the 17th of September, the Russian general was compelled to abandon his artillery and to force his way through the enemy. Ten thousand men were all that escaped. Hotze, who had advanced from the Grisons to Schwyz to Suvarof's rencontre, was, at the same time, defeated and killed at Schännis. Suvarof, although aware that the road across the St. Gothard was blocked by the lake of the four cantons, on which there were no boats, had the temerity to attempt the passage. In Airolo, he was obstinately opposed by the French under Lecourbe, and, although Shveikofski contrived to turn this strong position by scaling the pathless rocks, numbers of the men were, owing to Suvarof's impatience, sacrificed before it. On the 24th of September, 1799, he at length climbed the St. Gothard, and a bloody engagement, in which the French were worsted, took place on the Oberalpsee. Lecourbe blew up the Devil's Bridge, but, leaving the Unerloch open, the Russians pushed through that rocky gorge, and, dashing through the foaming Reuss, scaled the opposite rocks and drove the French from their position behind the Devil's Bridge. Altorf on the lake was reached in safety by the Russian general, who was compelled, owing to the want of boats, to seek his way through the valleys of Shächen and Muotta, across the almost impassable rocks, to Schwyz. The heavy rains rendered the undertaking still more arduous; the



Russians, owing to the badness of the road, were speedily barefoot ; the provisions were also exhausted. In this wretched state they reached Muotta on the 29th of September and learnt the discouraging news of Korsakof's defeat. Massena had already set off in the hope of cutting off Suvarof, but had missed his way. He reached Altorf, where he joined Lecourbe on the 29th, when Suvarof was already at Muotta, whence Massena found on his arrival that he had again retired across the Bragelberg, through the Klönthal. He was opposed on the lake of Klönthal by Molitor, who was, however, forced to retire by Auffenberg, who had joined Suvarof at Altorf and formed his advanced guard, Rosen, at the same time, beating off Massena with the rear-guard, taking five cannons and one thousand of his men prisoners. On the 1st of October, Suvarof entered Glarus, where he rested until the 4th, when he crossed the Panixer mountains through snow two feet deep to the valley of the Rhine, which he reached on the 10th, after losing the whole of his beasts of burden and two hundred of his men down the precipices ; and here ended his extraordinary march, which had cost him the whole of his artillery, almost all his horses, and a third of his men.

The archduke had, meanwhile, tarried on the Rhine, where he had taken Philippsburg and Mannheim, but had been unable to prevent the defeat of the English expedition under the duke of York by general Brune at Bergen, on the 19th of September. The archduke now, for the first time, made a retrograde movement, and approached Korsakof and Suvarof. The different leaders, however, did nothing but find fault with each other, and the czar, perceiving his project frustrated, suddenly recalled his troops, and the campaign came to a close.

Paul's anger fell without measure or reason on his armies and their chiefs. All the officers who were missing, that is to say, who were prisoners in France, were broken as deserters, and Suvarof, instead of being received with well merited honours, was deprived of his command, and not suffered to see the emperor's face. This unjust severity broke the veteran's heart. He died soon after his return to St. Petersburg ; and no Russian courtier, nor any member of the diplomatic body except the English ambassador, followed his remains to the grave.

## CHAPTER LII.

PAUL RECONCILED WITH FRANCE—REVIVAL OF THE  
ARMED NEUTRALITY—MURDER OF PAUL.

FRUSTRATED in the objects for which he had engaged in war, Paul was now in a mood easily to be moved to turn his arms against the allies who had deceived his hopes. He had fought for the re-establishment of monarchy in France, and of the old *status quo* in Europe; and the only result had been the aggrandisement of Austria, his own immediate neighbour, of whom he had much more reason to be jealous than of the remote power of France. The rapid steps, too, which Bonaparte was taking for the restoration of monarchical forms in that country were especially calculated to conciliate Paul's good-will towards the first consul. The latter and his able ministers promptly availed themselves of this favourable disposition through the connexions they had made in St. Petersburg. Fouché had such confidential correspondence even with ladies in the Russian capital, that he afterwards received the earliest and most correct intelligence of the emperor's murder. Two persons at the court of Petersburg were next gained over to France, or rather to Bonaparte's rising empire; these were the minister Rostopshin, and the emperor's favourite, the Turk Kutaisof, who had risen with unusual rapidity from the situation of the emperor's barber to the rank of one of the first Russian nobles. He was also nearly connected by relationship with Rostopshin.

Rostopshin first found means to send away general Dumnourier from Petersburg, whither he had come for the purpose of carrying on his intrigues in favour of the Bourbons. He next sought to bring Louis Cobenzl also into discredit with the emperor, and he succeeded in this, shortly before the opening of the campaign in Italy in 1800, when the cabinet of Vienna was called upon to give a plain and direct answer to the questions peremptorily put by the emperor of Russia. Paul required "that the cabinet should answer, without *if* or *but*, without circumlocution or reserve, whether or not Austria would, according to the terms of the treaty, restore the pope and the king to

their dominions and sovereignty." Cobenzl was obliged to reply, that if Austria were to give back Piedmont to the king of Sardinia it must still retain Tortona and Alessandria; and that it never would restore the three legations and Ancona. The measure of the emperor's indignation was now full; he forbade count Cobenzl the court, and at a later period not only ordered him to leave the country, but would not even allow an embassy or a chargé-d'affaires to remain.

The emperor proceeded more deliberately with regard to the English. At first he acted as if he had no desire to break with them; and he even allowed the Russians, whom they had hired for the expedition against Holland, to remain in Guernsey under Vioménil's command, in order to assist their employers in an expedition against Brittany. The English government, however, at length provoked him to extremities. They refused to redeem the Russians who had been made prisoners in their service, by giving in exchange for them an equal number of French, of whom their prisons were full; they refused to listen to any arrangements respecting the grand-mastership of the knights of Malta, or even as to the protectorate of the order, and gave the clearest intimations that they meant to keep the island for themselves. Bonaparte seized upon this favourable moment for flattering the emperor, by acting as if he had really more respect for Paul than the two powers for whom he had made such magnanimous sacrifices. Whilst the English refused to redeem the Russians made prisoners in their service by exchange, Bonaparte set them free without either exchange or ransom. The emperor of Germany had broken his word, and neither restored the pope nor the king of Sardinia, whilst Bonaparte voluntarily offered to restore the one and give compensation to the other. He assailed the emperor in a masterly manner on his weak side, causing the 6000 or 7000 Russians, whom the English refused to exchange, to be provided with new clothing and arms, and he wrote a letter to Panin, the Russian minister, in which he says "*that he was unwilling to suffer such brave soldiers as these Russians were to remain longer away from their native land on account of the English.*" In the same letter he paid another compliment to the emperor, and threw an apple of mortal strife between him and England. Knowing as he

did that his garrison in Malta could not hold out much longer, he offered to place the island in the hands of the emperor Paul, as a third party. This was precisely what the emperor desired; and Sprengporten, who was sent to France to bring away the Russians, and to thank the first consul, was to occupy Malta with them. The Russians were either to be conveyed thither by Nelson, who up to this time had kept the island closely blockaded, and was daily expecting its surrender, or at least he was to be ordered to let them pass; but both he and the English haughtily rejected the Russian mediation.

Paul now came to a complete breach with England. First of all he recalled his Russian troops from Guernsey, but on this occasion he was again baffled. It was of great importance to the English cabinet that Bonaparte should not immediately hear of the decided breach which had taken place between them and the emperor, and they therefore prevailed upon Vioménil, an *émigré*, who had the command of the Russians in Guernsey, to remain some weeks longer, in opposition to the emperor's will. Paul was vehemently indignant at this conduct; Vioménil, however, entered the English service, and was provided for by the English government in Portugal.

Lord Whitworth was next obliged to leave Russia, as count Cobenzl had previously been. Paul recalled his ambassadors from the courts of Vienna and London, and forthwith sent count Kalitchef to Paris to enter into friendly negotiations with Bonaparte. In the mean time, the English had recourse to some new subterfuges, and promised, that in case Malta capitulated, they would consent to allow the island to be administered, till the conclusion of a peace, by commissioners appointed by Russia, England, and Naples. Paul had already named Bailli de la Ferrette for this purpose; but the English refused to acknowledge his nominee, and even to receive the Neapolitans in Malta. Before this took place, however, the emperor had come to issue with England on a totally different question.

The idea of a union among the neutral powers, in opposition to the right alleged by England, when at war with any power whatsoever, to subject the ships of all neutral powers to search, had been relinquished by the empress Catharine



in 1781, to please the English ambassador at her court; Paul now resumed the idea. Bonaparte intimated his concurrence, and Paul followed up the matter with great energy and zeal, as in this way he had an opportunity of exhibiting himself in the character of an imperial protector of the weak, a defender of justice and right, and as the head of a general alliance of the European powers. Prussia also now appeared to do homage to him, for the weak king was made to believe, that by a close alliance between Russia and France, he might be helped to an extension of territory and an increase of subjects, without danger or cost to himself, or without war, which he abhorred beyond everything else. The first foundation, therefore, for an alliance between Russia and France, was laid in Berlin, where Beurnonville, the French ambassador, was commissioned to enter into negotiations with the Russian minister Von Krüderer. Beurnonville promised, in Bonaparte's name, that the Russian mediation in favour of Naples and Sardinia would be accepted, and that, in the question of compensations for the German princes, particular regard would be had to the cases of Baden and Wurtemberg.

As to the armed neutrality by sea against England, Prussia could easily consent to join this alliance, because she had in fact no navy; but it was much more difficult for Sweden and Denmark, whose merchant ships were always accompanied by frigates. In case, therefore, the neutral powers came to an understanding that no merchant vessels which were accompanied by a ship of war should be compelled to submit to a search, this might at any time involve them in hostilities with England. In addition to Denmark, Sweden and Prussia, which, under Paul's protectorate, were to conclude an alliance for the protection of trading vessels belonging to neutral powers against the arrogant claims of England, Bonaparte endeavoured to prevail upon the North Americans to join the alliance. They were the only parties who, by a specific treaty in 1794, had acknowledged as a positive right what the others only submitted to as an unfounded pretension on the part of England. On that occasion the Americans had broken with the French republic on the subject of this treaty, and Barras and Talleyrand had been shameless enough to propose that the Americans should pay

them a gratuity, in order to the renewal of their old friendship with France, which proposal, however, the Americans treated with contempt. On the 30th of September, 1800, their ambassadors concluded an agreement at Bonaparte's country seat of Morfontaine, which referred especially to the resistance which all the neutral powers under the protectorate of the emperor of Russia were desirous of making to the pretensions and claims of England. The Americans first of all declared that neutral flags should make a neutral cargo, except in cases where the ship was actually laden with goods contraband of war. It was afterwards precisely defined what were to be considered goods contraband of war. By the fourth article it was determined that neutral ships must submit to be detained, but that the ships of war so detaining a merchantman with a view to search should remain at least at the distance of a cannon-shot, and only be allowed to send a boat with three men to examine the ship's papers and cargo; and that in all cases in which a merchantman should be under convoy of a ship of war, no right of search should exist, because the presence of the convoy should be regarded as a sufficient guarantee against contraband. Inasmuch as England and Denmark were at open issue concerning this last point, the Americans would have been inevitably involved in the dispute had they immediately ratified the treaty of Morfontaine: they were, however, far too cunning to fall into this difficulty; and they did not therefore ratify the treaty till the Russian confederation had been dissolved.

Sweden and Denmark had come to issue with England concerning the right of search in 1798 and 1799, when four frigates, two Swedish and two Danish, were captured and brought into English ports. True, they were afterwards given up, but without any satisfaction, for the English still insisted upon the right of search. The dispute became most vehement in the case of the Danish frigate *Freya*, which, together with the merchantmen under her convoy, were brought into an English port, after a sharp engagement on the 25th of July, 1800; and the English, aware of the hostile negotiations which were going on in the north, at once despatched an expedition against Denmark.

Sixteen English ships of war suddenly appeared before Copenhagen, and most unexpectedly threatened the harbour

and city with a destructive bombardment, if Denmark did not at once acknowledge England's right of search at sea. Had this acknowledgment been made, Bonaparte's and the emperor's plan would have been frustrated in its very origin; but Denmark had the good fortune to possess, in its minister Bernsdorf, the greatest diplomatist of the whole revolutionary era, who contrived for that time to save Copenhagen without the surrender of any rights. It was quite impossible to resist by force, but he refused to enter upon the question of right or wrong; and in the agreement which he signed with Lord Whitworth on the 25th of August, 1800, he consented that in the mean time all occasion for dispute should be avoided, and thus the difficulty be postponed or removed. Denmark bound herself no longer to send her merchantmen under convoy—whereupon the *Freya*, and the vessels by which she was accompanied, were set at liberty. On this occasion the emperor Paul offered himself as arbitrator; and when Lord Whitworth rejected his interference or arbitration, he immediately laid an embargo on all the English ships in Russian ports.

The news of the agreement entered into at Copenhagen, however, no sooner reached Petersburg, than this first embargo was removed, and the dispute carried on merely in a diplomatic manner. At last the emperor Paul put an end to this paper war, when Vaubois, who had defended Malta since July, 1798, against the English, Russians, Neapolitans, and sometimes also the Portuguese, at length capitulated, on the 5th of September, 1800. The island was taken military possession of by the English without any reference whatever to the order, to Naples, to the promise which they had made to the emperor, or to Bailli de la Ferrette, whom Paul had named as the representative of the order. As soon as this news reached Petersburg, Paul's rage and indignation knew no bounds. On the 7th of November, he not only laid an embargo upon three hundred English ships then in his ports, but sent the whole of their crews into the interior of Russia, and allowed them only a few copecks a day for their support.

Lord Carysfort, the English ambassador in Berlin, was unable for six weeks to obtain any answer from the Prussian government with respect to its connexion with the northern confederation, although he insisted strongly upon it; and

yet Stedingk, the Swedish minister, and Rosenkranz, the Danish minister, had signed the agreement for an armed neutrality in the form of that of 1780 as early as the 17th of December, 1800, in Petersburg, and the Prussian minister, Von Luft, in the name of his king, had signified his acceptance of the alliance on the 18th. When lord Carysfort at length obtained an answer on the 12th of February to his demands, so long and repeatedly urged in vain, Haugwitz had drawn it up so equivocally both in form and contents, that we have only to subjoin the original in a note, to give intelligent readers some idea of the game which four or five intriguers at that time played with the narrow-minded king of Prussia.\* The emperor of Russia was so indignant at the ambiguity, that he not only expressed his feelings on the subject warmly, but also took some hostile measures against Prussia. On the other hand, the emperor invited Gustavus IV. to Petersburg, where he was received with the greatest splendour. He arrived at Petersburg at Christmas, 1800, and immediately, as if to insult the English, a grand meeting of the order of Malta was held; the king himself was loaded with marks of honour of every possible description, and at the end of December he signed a new agreement, by which the objects of that of the 16th of the same month were greatly enlarged. In the former alliance defensive operations alone were contemplated; but now offensive measures were also agreed upon, with the reservation, indeed, *if they should become necessary*. Paul took measures to refit his fleet, and an army was equipped which was to be placed under the commands of Soltikof, Pahlen, and Kutusof; the Danish fleet was in good con-

\* "La convention (the confederacy of Russia, Denmark and Sweden, which Prussia had joined on the 18th of December, 1800) dont on se plaint n'a été provoquée que par les mesures violentes de l'Angleterre contre les puissances du nord. Le traité n'a pas pour but, comme le prétend le gouvernement britannique, de former une ligue hostile. *Les stipulations portent que les mesures ne seront ni hostiles ni au détriment d'un pays, mais uniquement tendantes à la sûreté commune et de la navigation de ses sujets.* La déclaration du comte de Bernsdorff, portant que la cour du Copenhague n'avait aucun projet incompatible avec le maintien de la bonne harmonie entre les cours, est claire et précise à cet égard. Enfin la conduite arbitraire de l'Angleterre est seule la cause d'une accession à la convention du 16 décembre et qui oblige la Prusse à prendre part aux événements qui intéresseraient la cause commune."



dition ; the Russian minister in Paris, appeared to regard the circumstances as very favourable for gaining Hanover to his master without danger or risk ; and Pitt himself considered the state of affairs so unfavourable, that he seriously contemplated the propriety of retiring and making way for a new ministry, in order to render a peace possible. This close confederacy against England was, however, dissolved at the very moment in which the first consul appeared to be disposed to favour Naples and Sardinia, in order to gratify the wishes of the emperor of Russia.

The catastrophe in Petersburg is easily explained by the continually changing humours of the emperor, by his mental derangement, which had been constantly on the increase for several months previous to his murder, by the acts of violence and injustice which he suffered himself to commit, and by the dreadful apprehension which prevailed among all classes of society, from the empress and the grand-duke down to the very lowest citizen. The emperor's sober and rational intervals became progressively rarer, so that no man was sure for an instant either of his place or his life ; thousands of persons completely innocent were sent to Siberia, and yet goodness and mildness alternated with cruel severity. The emperor one while exhibited the most striking magnanimity, at another the meanest vindictiveness. The beautiful and virtuous empress had patiently submitted to her husband's preference for the plain Nelidof, who at least treated her with honour and respect ; but she was obliged also to submit to his attachment to Lapukhin, who continually provoked strife. She endured these things patiently, lived on good terms with the emperor, slept immediately under his chambers, and yet neither she nor her sons, Alexander and Constantine, were able to escape the suspicions of his morbid mind. It was whispered, by persons in the confidence of the court, that the emperor had said he would send the empress to Kalamagan, in the government of Astrakhan, Alexander to Shlusselburg, and Constantine to the citadel of Petersburg. It is not worth while to inquire what truth there may have been in these reports ; every one felt that the time had arrived to have recourse to the only means which can be employed in despotic kingdoms for effecting a complete change in the measures of government. This

means is the murder of the despot, which in such circumstances was usually effected in the Roman empire by the Prætorians, in Constantinople by the Janissaries, or by a clamorous and infuriated mob, in Petersburg by a number of confederated nobles; and in all these cases was regarded as a sort of necessary appendage to the existing constitution.

Rostopshin, the minister, who had long possessed the emperor's confidence, was dismissed and in disgrace; and count Pahlen, who was at the head of the emperor's dreadful police, was suddenly and excessively favoured. He, too, observed, when he had reached the highest pinnacle, that he began to be suspected. The count was an Esthonian by birth, a man of a cold, deep, and faithless disposition, and the instrument of all the cruelties and severities which had been exercised by the emperor. He was also commander-in-chief of all the troops in the capital, and since the 10th of March had become a member of the ministry for foreign affairs. Up to this period he had been successful in discovering and frustrating all the real or pretended attempts at dethroning the emperor, but he now formed a conspiracy against him, because he knew that Paul had called to his aid two formidable assistants, to use them against himself in case of necessity. The emperor had previously sent away from Petersburg, and now recalled, Lindner and Araktcheief, two of his most dreadful instruments of violence, the latter of whom played a fearful part in Russia even during the reign of the mild and clement emperor Alexander. Pahlen had previously taken his measures in such a manner, that a number of those to whom the murder of an emperor was no novelty, were at that time collected in Petersburg, and only waited for a hint, either with or without Pahlen, to fall upon the emperor, who had personally given them mortal offence.

Valerian, Nicholas, and Plato Zubof, had first been publicly affronted by the emperor like the Orlofs, and afterwards dismissed; they remained under compulsory absence in Germany till they found a medium for securing the favour of the only person who had any influence over the emperor. This medium was the French actress, Chevalier, who ruled the Turk Kutaisof (formerly a *valet de chambre*, but

now adorned with all possible titles, honours, and orders, with the broad ribbons and stars of Europe), and through him ruled the emperor. Chevalier obtained permission for the Zubofs to return to the court, and Plato held Kutaisof bound by his expressed intention of marrying the Turk's daughter. Plato had been previously commander-in-chief of the army, and could, in case of need, reckon upon it with the greater certainty, as it had been made discontented by the gross and ridiculous treatment of the generals of the whole army, and even of such a man as Suvarof. Participators in a plan for setting aside the emperor were easily found among the nobles, as soon as it became certain that there was nothing to fear. It was necessary, however, to obtain the consent of the two eldest grand-dukes; but not a word was said of the murder, but merely of the removal of their father from the government. Alexander was not easily prevailed upon to acquiesce in the deposition of his father, as, however numerous Alexander's failings in other respects may have been, both he and his mother were persons of gentle hearts. Pahlen undertook the business of persuading the prince, for which he was by far the best fitted, inasmuch as he knew all the secrets of the court, and combined all power in himself; he therefore succeeded in convincing the imperial family of the dangers with which they themselves were threatened, and of the necessity of deposing the emperor. He appears to have prevailed with Alexander by showing that he could only guard against a greater evil by consenting to his father's dethronement. Certain it is, at least, that Alexander signed the proclamation, announcing his own assumption of the reins of government, two hours before the execution of the deed by the conspirators.

The emperor with his family lived in the Mikhailoff palace; the 23rd of March, 1801, was chosen for the accomplishment of the deed, for on that day the Semenovski battalion of guards was on duty at the palace. The most distinguished men among the conspirators were the Zubofs, general count Benningsen, a Hanoverian, who had distinguished himself in the Polish wars under Catharine, Tchitchakof, Tartarinof, Tolstoi, Yashvel, Yesselovitch, and Ouvarof, together with count Pahlen himself, who did not accompany the others

into the emperor's bed-chamber, but had taken his measures so skilfully, that if the enterprise failed, he might appear as his deliverer. Very shortly before the execution of the deed, Pahlen communicated the design to general Talizin, colonel of the regiment of Preobrajenski guards, to general Deporadovitch, colonel of the Semonovski guards, together with some fifty other officers whom he entertained on the night on which the murder was committed.

On the evening before his death Paul received, when sitting at supper with his mistress, a note from prince Mecherki, warning him of his danger, and revealing the names of the conspirators. He handed it unopened to Kutaisof, saying he would read it on the morrow. Kutaisof put it in his pocket, and left it there when he changed his dress next day to dine with the emperor. He returned to get it, but Paul growing impatient sent for him in a hurry, and the trembling courtier came back without the letter on which so much depended. On the night of the 3rd Paul went early to bed; soon afterwards the conspirators repaired to his apartment, the outer door of which was opened to them in compliance with the demand of Argamakof, an aide-de-camp, who pretended that he was come to make his report to the emperor. A Cossack who guarded the door of the bedroom offered resistance and was cut down. The conspirators rushed in and found the bed empty. "He has escaped us," cried some of them. "That he has not," said Benningsen. "No weakness, or I will put you all to death." Putting his hand on the bed-clothes and feeling them warm, he observed that the emperor could not be far off, and presently he discovered him crouching behind a screen. The conspirators required him to sign his abdication. He refused, a conflict ensued; a sash was passed round his neck, and he was strangled after a desperate resistance.

Alexander was seized with the most passionate grief when he learned at what a price he had acquired the crown. He had supped with his father at nine o'clock, and at eleven he took possession of the empire, by a document which had been drawn up and signed two hours and a half previously. The most dreadful thing of all, however, was, that he was obliged not only to suffer the two chief conspirators, Zubof and Pahlen, to remain about his



person, but to allow them to share the administration of the empire between them. It was a piece of good fortune that those two thoroughly wicked men were of very different views, by which means he was first enabled to remove Pahlen, and afterwards Zubof also. Their associates, however, remained, and at a later period we shall find count Benningsen at the head of the army which was to deliver Prussia after the battle of Jena.

Paul was twice married: by his first wife, Nathalie Alexievna, princess of Hesse Darmstadt, who died in 1776, he had no family; by his second, Marie Fedeorovna, princess of Wurtemberg, who died in 1828, he had ten children. Their names are given below.\*

The death of Paul, and Nelson's victory at Copenhagen, dissolved the northern confederacy, and defeated the hopes which Napoleon had founded upon the alliance between France and Russia. Prompt to seize any opportunity for calumniating the British government, the first consul announced the assassination to the French people in these words:—"Paul died on the night of the 23rd March. The English fleet passed the Sound on the 30th. History will unveil the connexion which may have existed between these events." History has completely refuted the charge thus insinuated; no one now pretends to attach the slightest credit to it, and M. Thiers frankly declares that the British cabinet "was as much taken by surprise at the death of the czar as the rest of Europe."

The overthrow of the British power was another project concerted between France and Russia, which was frustrated by Paul's death. The plan agreed on was in these terms:

"A French army 35,000 strong, with light artillery, under the command of Massena, shall be moved from France to

\* Alexander, born 1777, died 1825; Constantine, born 1779, died 1831; Alexandrina, born 1783, married to Joseph, palatine of Hungary, died 1801; Helena, born 1784, married to Frederick, prince of Mecklenburg Strelitz, died in 1816; Maria, born 1786, married to Charles, grand-duke of Saxe Weimar; Catharine, born 1788, married first to prince George of Holstein Oldenburg; secondly to William I., King of Wurtemberg, died in 1819; Olga, born 1792, died 1795; Anne, born 1795, married to William II., king of Holland; Nicholas, born 1796; Michael, born 1798, died 1852.

Ulm, whence, with the consent of Austria, it shall descend the Danube to the Black Sea.

“Arrived there, a Russian fleet will transport it to Taganrok; thence it shall move to Tzaritzin on the Volga, where it will find boats to convey it to Astrakhan.

“There it will find a Russian army of 35,000 men, composed of 15,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 10,000 Cossacks, amply provided with artillery and the horses necessary for its conveyance.

“The combined army shall be transported by the Caspian Sea, from Astrakhan to Astrabad, where magazines of all sorts shall be established for its use.

“The march from the frontiers of France to Astrabad will be made in eighty days; fifty more will be requisite to bring the army to the banks of the Indus, by the route of Herat, Felah, and Candahar.”

Paul afterwards agreed to increase the Cossacks to 50,000.\*

Of this project, it is not too much to say that its abandonment was a fortunate event for France and Russia rather than for England; for she could have nothing to fear from the remnant, if any, of the invading force which should reach her Indian frontiers after such a march.

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## CHAPTER LIII.

### ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER—HIS CHARACTER—OPENING ACTS OF HIS REIGN—PEACE WITH ENGLAND.

THE accession of Alexander was hailed with sincere and universal delight, not only as an escape from the wretched and extravagant reign of Paul, but as the opening fulfilment of the expectations which had long been anxiously fixed on his heir. The new monarch was twenty-five years of age, of majestic figure, and noble countenance, though his features were not perfectly regular. He possessed an acute mind, a generous heart, and a most winning grace of manner. “Still,”

\* Hardenberg, vii. 497.

says M. Thiers, "there might be discerned in him traces of hereditary infirmity. His mind, lively, changeable, and susceptible, was continually impressed with the most contrary ideas. But this remarkable prince was not always led away by such momentary impulses; he united with his extensive and versatile comprehension a profound secretiveness which baffled the closest observation. He was well-meaning, and a dissembler at the same time." Napoleon said of him at St. Helena, "The emperor of Russia possesses abilities, grace, and information; he is fascinating, but one cannot trust him; he is a true Greek of the Lower Empire; he is, or pretends to be, a metaphysician; his faults are those of his education, or of his preceptor. What discussions have I not had with him! He maintained that hereditary right was an abuse, and I had to expend all my eloquence and logic during a full hour, to prove that hereditary right maintains the repose and happiness of nations. Perhaps he wished to mystify me; for he is cunning, false, and skilful."

Alexander's capital defect was indecision of character. His impulses were generous and humane; the circumstances of his position were of evil tendency, and the stronger of the two contending forces habitually prevailed. Hence, he was continually acting in violation of his principles and his professions. He had been trained to ultra-liberal views by his republican tutor Laharpe—he, the destined inheritor of a military despotism; and his twenty-four years of reign served only to show the utter futility of his aspirations, and to furnish his successor with a specious apology for his stern intolerance of every germ of freedom.

The difficulty of judging Alexander, and some of his acts, has been felt by very competent persons. We quote the words of an ambassador of France at the court of Russia, whom the emperor and all those around him highly esteemed, namely, the vicomte de la Ferronays, who on the 19th May, 1823, wrote to his court as follows: "It becomes every day more and more difficult to comprehend the character of the emperor. I do not believe it possible that any man can talk the language of honesty and sincerity better than himself; a conversation with him always leaves a favourable impression: you quit him persuaded that here is a prince who unites to the finest qualities of the gentleman all those of a

great sovereign, of a man of profound experience, gifted with the greatest energy. He reasons wonderfully well; he urges his argument home; he explains himself with eloquence, and with the warmth of one who is earnest and sincere. Well! after all this, experience, the events of his life, what I see every day, warn you not to rely too much upon him. Multiplied instances of acts of weakness prove to you that the energy he throws into his words does not exist in his character. And yet on the other hand, the same character may be seized all at once with a fit of energy and excitement—a paroxysm that may suffice to bring him instantly to determinations the most violent, whose consequences may be incalculable. Besides, he is rather jealous of us: he cannot reconcile himself to the fact that Paris is the capital of Europe, and that St. Petersburg is only a pompous aggregation of structures raised upon a swamp, which no one cares to visit, and whence its inhabitants are glad to escape to any distance as often as they can. The emperor, in fact, is excessively suspicious—a proof of weakness; and this feeling is a misfortune so much the greater, as this prince is, to the full extent of the word (at least, I believe so), the most honest man I know. He will, perhaps, often do wrong, but it is ever his desire to do right.”

While Alexander was yet an imperial prince, subjected to the severe rule, first of Catharine, and then of Paul I., he formed an intimate acquaintance with some young persons of his own age, such as Paul Strogonof, Novosiltzof, and prince Adam Czartoryski. This last, descended from one of the most ancient families in Poland, and much attached to his native land, was at St. Petersburg as a sort of hostage: he served in the regiment of guards, and lived at court with the young grand-dukes. Alexander, drawn towards him by a mutual analogy in sentiments and ideas, communicated to him all the dreams and hopes of his youth. Both in secret deplored the misfortunes of Poland, a thing very natural in a descendant of the Czartoryskis, but rather surprising in the grandson of Catharine. Alexander solemnly vowed to his friend that when he ascended the throne, he would restore her laws and liberty to unhappy Poland.

Paul, who had observed this intimacy, felt offended at it, and exiled prince Czartoryski, by naming him his minister to the



king of Sardinia, a king without a realm. Scarcely was Alexander seated upon the throne, when he sent off a courier to his friend, then resident at Rome, and recalled him to St. Petersburg. He also united near his person Novosiltzof and Paul Strogonof. These three formed a sort of occult government, composed of young men without experience, animated by the most generous feelings, and full of illusions, little proper, it must be said, to direct a great government in a difficult conjuncture of the times. They were impatient to free themselves from the old Russians, who had, until then, held the reins of government, and with whom they had no kind of sympathy. One personage alone, older and more serious than themselves, the prince Kotchubey, mingled in this youthful coterie, and tempered their sanguine impulses by his riper reason. He had travelled all over Europe, acquired a vast deal of knowledge, and engaged his sovereign's attention upon every opportunity with the ameliorations which he believed it would be very useful to effect in the interior of the empire. All alike censured the course of policy which led at first to the making war upon France on account of her revolution, and afterwards in carrying it on against England in behalf of a thesis about the law of nations. They were against a war of principles with France, or a naval war with England. The great empire of the north, according to them, was best employed in holding the balance between the two powers that threatened to swallow up the world in their quarrel, and in thus becoming the arbitrator of Europe, and the support of the feeble states against the strong. Generally, however, they directed their attention much less to foreign politics than to the interior regeneration of the empire. They meditated nothing less than giving her new institutions, modelled in part upon those they had seen in civilised countries; they had, in a word, the generosity, inexperience, and vanity of youth.

The ostensible ministers of Alexander were the old Russians, prejudiced against France, warm in behalf of England, and moreover much disliked by the sovereign. Count Pahlen alone did not share the prejudices and predilections of his colleagues, but wished that Russia should be free from every influence, remaining neuter between France and England. In this respect his ideas agreed with those of the new emperor and

his friends. But Pahlen committed the mistake of treating Alexander as a youthful prince, whom he had set upon the throne, directed, and would fain still direct. The sensitive vanity of his young master was thus frequently wounded. Count Pahlen behaved, too, with great harshness towards the dowager empress, who showed much ostentatious sorrow, and a deadly hatred to her husband's murderers. In a religious establishment of her own foundation, she placed an image of the Virgin Mary, with Paul at her feet, imploring the vengeance of Heaven upon his assassins. Count Pahlen ordered the image to be removed, in spite of the cries of the empress, and the displeasure of her son. An ascendancy, exercised in such a manner as this, could not be of very prolonged duration, and Pahlen was soon dismissed.

In the beginning of Alexander's reign reform succeeded reform, and all Europe applauded. He quickly put a stop to the system of terror and to the absurd vexations which Paul had introduced. He disgraced the instruments who had worked out the will of that poor maniac; he repaired the crying injustice which had been committed; he once more abolished the terrible secret inquisition, but, as we already said, it was again established by his successor. He instituted a permanent council, and contemplated the complete reorganisation of the administration of the interior. He relaxed the rigour of the censorship of the press, and granted permission to introduce foreign works. He reduced the taxes and the expenditure of the court; and in the first year of his reign he abstained from exacting the recruits for his army, an exaction odious to those whom it affects, and therefore often accompanied with fearful violences. He applied himself most diligently to affairs, and laboured almost as much as his grandmother, who had devoted three hours to the concerns of the state when her ministers came to confer with her. He required detailed reports from all the higher officers of state; and having examined them, caused them to be published, a thing never before heard of in Russia. He abolished punishment by torture; forbade the confiscation of hereditary property; solemnly declared that he would not endure the habit of making grants of peasants, a practice till then common with the autocrats, and forbade the announcement in public journals of sales of human beings. He applied himself to the reform of the

tribunals; established pecuniary fines for magistrates convicted of evading or violating their duties; constituted the senate a high court of justice, and divided it into seven departments in order to provide against the slowness of law proceedings; and re-established the commission which had been appointed by Catharine for the compilation of a code. He applied himself to the protection of commerce; made regulations for the benefit of navigation, and extended and improved the communication in the interior of his empire. He did much to promote general education, and established several new universities with large numbers of subsidiary schools. He permitted every subject of his empire to choose his own avocation in life, regardless of restraints formerly imposed with respect to rank, and removed the prohibition on foreign travel which had been enacted in the last reign. He permitted his nobles to sell to their serfs, along with their personal freedom, portions of land which should thus become the *bonâ fide* property of the serf purchaser—a measure by which he fondly hoped to lay the basis of a class of free cultivators. It was under his auspices that his mother, Marie Feodorovna, founded many hospitals and educational institutes, both for nobles and burghers, which will immortalise her name.\*

One of the first acts of Alexander's reign was to give orders that the British sailors who had been taken from the ships laid under sequestration, and marched into the interior, should be set at liberty and carefully conducted at the public expense to the ports from which they had been severally taken. At the same time all prohibitions against the export of corn were removed; a measure of no small importance to the famishing population of the British Isles, and hardly less material to the gorged proprietors of Russian produce. The young emperor shortly after wrote a letter with his own hand to the king of England, expressing in the warmest terms his desire to re-establish the amicable relations of the two empires; a declaration which was received with no less joy in London than in St. Petersburg. The British cabinet immediately sent lord St. Helens to the Russian capital, and on the 17th of June a treaty was concluded, which limited and defined the right of search, and which Napoleon denounced as "an ignominious treaty, equivalent to an ad-

\* Schnitzler, vol. i. p. 44.

mission of the sovereignty of the seas in the British parliament, and the slavery of all other states." In the same year (Oct. 4—8) Alexander also concluded treaties of peace with France and Spain; for between Russia and the former power there had previously existed only a cessation of hostilities, without any written convention.

The incorporation of Georgia with the empire, an event long prepared by the insidious means habitually employed by Russia, was consummated in this year. The people of Georgia have always had a high reputation for valour, but at the end of the last century they suffered immensely from the Tatars and the Lesghians. Russia supported Georgia, not sufficiently indeed to prevent the enemy from destroying Tiflis, but quite enough to prove to the country, that once under the Russian rule, it would be safe from the Mussulmans. Alexander's manifesto of the 12th of Sept., 1801, says, that he accepts the weight of the Georgian throne, not for the sake of extending the empire, already so large, but only from humanity! Even in Russia very few could believe that the Georgians surrendered themselves to the czar from a spontaneous acknowledgment of the superiority of the Russian rule, and of its ability to make the people happy; to disabuse themselves of any such notion, they had but to look at the queen of Georgia, Maria, who was detained at St. Petersburg, in the Tauric palace—a name that might well remind her of the treacherous acquisition of another kingdom. She rode through the streets in one of the court carriages, and her features expressed great affliction. The covering which she wore on her head, as usual in Georgia, prevented the people from seeing the scars of the sabre wounds she had received before she quitted the country. Her consort, George XIII., had bequeathed the kingdom to the Russians, but she protested against the act; and when the Russian colonel Lazaref came to carry her away to St. Petersburg, she refused to go with him. He was about to use violence, but the queen took out a poniard from her bosom and stabbed him. The interpreter drew his sabre and gave her several cuts on the head, so that she fell down insensible.\*

\* Golovin.—“The Nations of Russia and Turkey,” &c.



## CHAPTER LIV.

DISPUTES BETWEEN THE COURTS OF RUSSIA AND FRANCE—  
THE THIRD COALITION—CAMPAIGN OF AUSTERLITZ.

CONCURRENTLY with his domestic reforms, Alexander occupied himself in an extensive series of negotiations, having for their object the general settlement of Europe upon such new bases as the results of the last war had rendered necessary. In particular, he was engaged as joint arbiter with Bonaparte in the matter of the indemnifications to be made to those princes who had lost a part or the whole of their possessions by the cession of the left bank of the Rhine. Alexander was secretly dissatisfied with the part he was made to play in these transactions, for the authority which he shared in appearance with Bonaparte, was in reality monopolised by the latter. He abstained, however, from remonstrating, contenting himself for the present with the outward show of respect paid to his empire, and with a precedent which, added to that of Teschen, established in future the right of Russia to mix itself up in the affairs of Germany. The peace of Amiens between France and England was broken, and a war was declared on the 18th of May, 1803, between the two powers, which was ultimately to involve the whole of Europe. Meanwhile, many cases were arising to increase Alexander's displeasure against Bonaparte.

It does not appear, as Bonaparte continually asserted, that English intrigues had anything to do in promoting the rupture between France and Russia in 1803. The Russians were too good politicians not to perceive that Bonaparte had only made use of them to obtain the requisite power in Germany, and that he had afterwards followed out his own plans, without any regard to what he had promised them. This will be at once seen from a concise enumeration of the treaties, respecting the violation of which the emperor Alexander complained in 1803. When Muravief communicated from Hamburg to the emperor Paul the proposals of Bonaparte respecting a reconciliation, there were two points in particular which induced the emperor to despatch Kalitcheff to Paris to negotiate a treaty. These points were—firstly,

that peace should be granted to the king of Naples, and that there should be an independent sovereignty guaranteed to him; secondly, that Piedmont should be restored to the king of Sardinia. The emperor was duped as to both these points. Piedmont was indeed not definitely united to France, but every year some new step was taken which proved that it was never to be restored to its former master. That Bonaparte never intended to fulfil the articles respecting Naples and Sardinia was so clear, even before Paul's death, that Kalitcheff handed in a very peremptory note, on the 18th of February, 1801, which put an end, for the time, to all thoughts of a treaty. In this note he demanded peremptorily, that the five articles, *the concession of which*, as he expressed himself, *had induced his emperor to concede other points to the cabinet of the Tuileries*, should be immediately fulfilled. These articles the reader will find in the note.\* The negotiations were not renewed till Markof took Kalitcheff's place as minister in Paris. He concluded, at the same time, a public treaty, and another, kept more secret even than secret treaties usually are, but which was known to the English not very long after. We give in a note the eleven articles of this secret treaty, concluded the 11th of October, 1801.† Bonaparte would not fulfil the terms of

\* The five articles were:—1. The kings of Naples and Sardinia shall be again put in possession of their states, and suffered to remain so. 2. The integrity and independence of these two states shall be maintained. 3. The pope shall be maintained in his position as a temporal prince. 4. The grand-duke of Tuscany shall receive indemnification in Italy, not in Germany. 5. Russia participates in all conferences as to indemnification, founded on the peace of Lunéville.

† 1. Russia and France will apply their utmost efforts to arrange that the indemnifications in Germany shall be so divided, that Austria and Prussia shall neutralise one another. 2. Both powers will unite in settling, in common, the affairs of Italy and of the Holy See. 3. Russia will procure from the Ottoman Porte a ratification of the treaty concluded by its minister with France on the 9th of October. 4. The independence of Naples shall be secured. 5. The French troops shall evacuate the Neapolitan territory. 6. Russia and France will come to a friendly understanding respecting the indemnification to be made to the king of Sardinia. 7. The duke of Wurtemberg shall receive some share of the plunder of Germany. 8. The electorate of Bavaria, and the territory of the margrave of Baden, shall also be increased. 9. The independence of the republic of the Seven Islands shall be secured. 10. All French prisoners in Russia and Turkey

the treaty. Markof set spies to watch his proceedings, placed himself in close connexion with the royalists, who were then engaged in conspiracies, and bribed and corrupted Bonaparte's own people. A rupture between the two courts was hardly to be avoided after the conduct of the Russian ambassador, who, immediately after the Bourbons had rejected the offers of the first consul, made at the instigation of the emperor Alexander, secretly acted in their favour.

The Neapolitan ambassador at the court of St. Petersburg (the duca di Serra Capriola) had prevailed upon the emperor Alexander to advise the first consul to advance money for the support of the banished princes. Bonaparte eagerly grasped at this proposal; he was very willing to secure a comfortable existence to the princes, if they would give up all ideas of restoration to power. This furnished the princes with a new opportunity of considering Bonaparte's conduct as an acknowledgment of their rights, and of trumpeting forth their magnanimous refusal to sell their honour for money. The Russian emperor, therefore, supported the Bourbons with money, and Markof assumed the extraordinary position of a minister intriguing from, and in, Paris in favour of the Bourbons. The levity of Markof, and the seriousness of the first consul, rendered them at any rate ill-suited to each other, particularly if Markof really was the author of the bitter epigram on the first consul which was attributed to him.\* The emperor, however, allowed Markof to remain in Paris; and Bonaparte endured him for some time, while he sought all manner of excuses, by way of pacifying the emperor for the non-fulfilment of his promise respecting Piedmont. First, he appointed, instead of it, as compensation to the king of Sardinia, Parma and Placentia; then the *Stato dei Presidii*, which he had taken from the king of Naples; then the town and territory of Siena; and finally, in 1803, the republic of Lucca: but he was in earnest in none of all these offers. The quarrel respecting the promised but not yet determined compensation to the king

shall be set at liberty. 11. Russia and France will unite in securing peace and the balance of power, and in protecting the freedom of the seas, and will commence negotiations for these purposes.

\* Namely, that Bonaparte was "*tout le jacobinisme renfermé dans un seul homme, et armé de tous les instruments révolutionnaires.*"

of Sardinia was still going on, when Bonaparte, on the recommencement of the war with England, caused the seaport towns in Naples to be occupied by his troops, thus violating the principal article of the above-mentioned secret treaty. The occupation of Hanover afforded another ground of complaint, inasmuch as Mecklenburg and Oldenburg were endangered, the Hans Towns thrown open to the French, and therefore the commerce of Russia interfered with. Oldenburg and Mecklenburg were protected by Russia, on account of their connexion with the imperial family. When England refused to allow Hanover to be occupied by the Prussians, and the blockade to be removed from the German harbours, the quarrel between France and Russia became more violent, particularly as the Russians first refused to mediate for the restoration of Malta, and afterwards offered their mediation under very restricted conditions.

As early as 1803, the relations between the two powers were of such a nature, that the Russian chancellor, Vorontzof, said plainly, in a note of the 18th of July, "that if the war were to be prolonged between France and England, Russia would be compelled finally to take part in it." Before this declaration on the part of Russia, Bonaparte had a scene with Markof, which alone might well have caused a rupture. He addressed the Russian ambassador, in a public audience, so rudely and violently, that even Bignon, who is disposed to worship Bonaparte as a demi-god, is obliged to confess that his hero entirely lost his dignity, and forgot his position. If Alexander afterwards overlooked this insult, it was probably because he considered that Markof had not behaved very prudently during his stay in Paris. He and his secretary of legation, Baykof, were in the habit of speaking in private society with an imprudence and a boldness which could not fail to irritate the first consul, and the more so, as this was just at the time of the above-mentioned conspiracies. Besides this, Markof had chosen for his mistress a lady who had been an *émigrée*, and who now continued to intrigue in Paris. She was persecuted by Bonaparte's police, under the pretext of her being one of the emigrants yet on the list of suspected persons, but, in reality, because she would not lend herself to act as a spy on



Markof's actions. Besides all this, Markof's private secretary was the Genevese Christin, who was known as one of the agents of the former minister, Calonne, and made very suspicious journeys from time to time. A serious quarrel took place, on the subject of this man, in August, 1803, between the emperor and the first consul, after the latter had written an autograph letter direct to the emperor, on the 26th or 29th of July, requiring Markof's recal. As to Christin, Bonaparte was informed by his police that he was a very active agent in the royalist manœuvres, commenced partly in Germany and partly in Switzerland, and supported by English money; he treated him, therefore, as if he had had no connexion with Russia. Christin was arrested in Switzerland, without any regard to the protection of Russia, or to his situation as secretary to the Russian ambassador, brought to Paris, and lodged in the Temple. In a similar manner, the chevalier Vernegas, who belonged to the Russian embassy in Rome, was arrested by the French, in violation of the law of nations, and brought to Paris; and he was not released in consequence of the representations of the Russian ambassador, but at the special request of the pope.

Christin's arrest was followed by a new outbreak of Bonaparte's violence at an audience, and of such a nature as to render it impossible for Markof to remain in Paris, even though his cabinet might not find it advisable as yet to break off all relations with France. Bonaparte, instead of paying any attention to Markof's repeated representations on the subject of the arrest of his secretary, forgot himself so far as to insult Markof himself personally; and towards the conclusion of his invective, actually to defy the Russian government. After this scene, the ambassador entirely broke off all intercourse with the court of the Tuileries. His emperor, however, helped himself out of the difficulty with that readiness of invention for which Bonaparte called him "as treacherous as a Greek." He recalled Markof, and gratified Bonaparte in this respect; but, on the other hand, sent Markof a special order, as a sign of his continued favour. Markof wore this on the occasion of his farewell visit at the Tuileries, and affected to assure every one that he considered his recal in the light of a favour.

When Markof withdrew in November, he left his secretary of legation, d'Oubril, as acting ambassador in his place. Every one, however, foresaw a breach at no very distant period; and Russia had already, in the autumn of 1803, when nothing was to be done with Prussia, entered into a closer connexion with England. Negotiations were also commenced with Austria, and a union with Sweden and Denmark, for the purpose of liberating Hanover, was spoken of. This was the state of affairs at the beginning of 1804: the murder of the duc d'Enghein brought matters to a crisis. The mother of the Russian emperor had been all along hostile to everything proceeding from Bonaparte; and the mild and gentle spirit of the emperor, like that of all persons of good feeling in Europe, was deeply wounded by the fate of the duke. From the beginning of 1804, he had no further political reasons for keeping up a friendly relation with France; he therefore gave himself up entirely to his natural feelings on hearing of the catastrophe at Vincennes. At the very next audience the court appeared in mourning, and the emperor himself received general Hédouville, to his very great surprise, in that garb. Thiers confesses that Hédouville was surprised; but he is never at a loss for phrases, and contrives to free the general from his embarrassment, and to make him play a dignified part at the audience. The emperor, however, went still further: he was the only one among the sovereigns of his time, with the exception of the king of Sweden, who publicly blamed this violation of the territory, and of the most sacred rights of the German empire. The emperor made use of the pretext, that he had become, by his share in the new division of Germany, and in the distribution of the secularised spiritual, and of the suppressed temporal, states, a guarantee for the independence of the German princes. None of the latter, not even the emperor or the elector of Baden, who was most particularly concerned, uttered any remonstrance in the diet at Ratisbon; the emperor Alexander alone handed in a note, calling upon the diet to require satisfaction for the violation of the territorial rights of Baden. King Gustavus IV. of Sweden, in his quality as a guarantee of the Westphalian peace, also summoned the German empire to

vengeance. But he did this in such an extraordinary and extravagant manner as showed too plainly that his understanding was not quite right.

The emperor Alexander was not satisfied, however, with urging on the lazy, slow, and timid diet; he caused a note to be handed in to the cabinet of the Tuileries, by his minister d'Oubril, relative to the occurrence in Ettenheim. The note which had been sent to the diet was very properly and well answered, because Bonaparte left the answer to Talleyrand and his diplomatists; but it was quite otherwise with d'Oubril's note, the answer to which Bonaparte himself dictated.

In this document, which was published and intended for the emperor, bearing date the 20th of April, the son, who was very sensitive in such matters, was very rudely put in mind of the murder of his father; and the English were made to bear the blame of this murder, without any reason or proof whatever. Meanwhile Hédouville announced to the Russian court the elevation of the first consul to the imperial dignity. Alexander refused to acknowledge the new sovereign, and the king of Sweden followed his example. The French ambassador immediately quitted St. Petersburg, and d'Oubril answered the insulting note by another, in which harsh language was as harshly returned. This note was to give the final conditions, on which the friendship between Russia and France could continue to subsist. These conditions, as set forth in the note of the 24th of July, are: that Russia should have a voice in arranging the affairs of Italy; that the promise of compensation to the king of Sardinia, so often made by France, should be at last fulfilled; that the French troops should be withdrawn from the north of Germany, and the neutrality of the smaller states respected for the future. We give the conclusion in the original, because in it the reference to the emperor Paul's murder is very summarily disposed of.\*

\* "A peine croira-t-on que, pour soutenir un principe erroné, le cabinet de St. Cloud ait pu s'écarter de ce que les égards et les convenances requièrent, au point de choisir, parmi les exemples à citer, celui qui était le moins fait à l'être, et de rappeler dans une pièce officielle la mort d'un père à la sensibilité de son auguste fils, en tâchant, contre toute vérité et croyance, de charger d'une accusation atroce un

From this time all direct communication ceased between the courts. Rayneval, whom Hédouville had left as his chargé-d'affaires, was also recalled, and d'Oubril left Paris in August.

Alexander had not waited for this opportunity to concert means for setting bounds to Bonaparte's ambition. By the declarations interchanged between the courts of St. Petersburg and Berlin (May 3rd and 24th), it was agreed that they should not allow the French troops in Germany to go beyond the frontier of Hanover; and that should this happen, each of the two powers should employ 40,000 men to repel such an attempt. A convention was also signed between Russia and Austria before the end of the year, and they agreed to set on foot an army of 350,000 men. England, under the administration of Mr. Pitt, added her strength to these combinations, and united the several powers in a third coalition for the purpose of wresting from France the countries subdued by it since 1792, reducing that kingdom within its ancient limits, and finally introducing into Europe a general system of public right. The plan was the same as that which ten years afterwards was executed by the Grand Alliance; it failed in 1805, because the participation of Prussia, on which the allies had reckoned, was withheld from the most ignoble motives.

The negotiation of the several treaties connected with the coalition, occupied the greater part of the year 1805. By the treaty of St. Petersburg (August 11th) between Great Britain and Russia, it was agreed that Alexander should make another attempt for arranging matters with Bonaparte, so as to prevent the war. The Russian minister Novosiltzof was sent to Paris by way of Berlin, where he received the passports procured for him from the French cabinet by that of Prussia; but at the same time, orders reached him from St. Petersburg, countermanding his journey. The annexation of the Ligurian republic to France, at the moment when the allies were making conciliatory overtures to Napoleon, appeared to the emperor too serious an outrage to allow of his prosecuting further negotiations. War was consequently resolved on.

*gouvernement, que celui de France ne se fait pas scrupule de calomnier sans cesse, parce qu'il se trouve en guerre avec lui."*



Napoleon seemed to be wholly intent on his design of invading England. Part of his troops had already embarked (August 27th), when on a sudden the camp of Boulogne was broken up, and the army put in march towards the Rhine, which river it passed within a month after. Austria had set on foot three armies. The archduke Charles commanded that of Italy; his brother John was stationed with the second army on the Tyrol; and the third was commanded nominally by the archduke Frederick, the emperor's cousin, but in reality by general Mack. The first Russian army under Kutusof had arrived in Galicia, and was continuing its march in all haste. It was followed by another under Michelson. The Russian troops in Dalmatia were to attempt a landing in Italy.

Mack having crossed the Ian (Sept. 8th), and entered Suabia, Napoleon's plan was to cut him off from the army of Kutusof, which was marching through Austria. In this he succeeded by a violation of the Prussian territory. Marmont, who had marched by way of Mayence, and Bernadotte, who had conducted an army into Franconia, where they were joined by the Bavarians, traversed the country of Anspach, and thus came on the rear of the Austrian army (Oct. 6th). From that date, scarcely a day passed without a battle favourable to the French. Several Austrian divisions were forced to lay down their arms. Mack, who had thrown himself into Ulm, lost all resolution, and capitulated with 25,000 men (Oct. 19th). Mack's army was thus totally dissipated, except 6000 cavalry, with which the archduke Ferdinand had opened himself a passage through Franconia, and 20,000 men, with whom Kienmayer had retired to Braunau, where he was met by the vanguard of Kutusof. The two generals continued their retreat. The Russians repassed the Danube near Grein (Nov. 9th), and directed their march towards Moravia. A few days after (Nov. 13th), Vienna fell into the hands of the French. The Austrians had renounced the design of defending their capital, but decided that the passage of the river should be disputed. Vienna is situated at some distance from the Danube, which flows to the right of the city between wooded islands. The Austrians had placed explosive materials under the flooring of the wooden bridge which crosses the several arms of the river, and were ready to blow

it up the moment the French should show themselves. They kept themselves in readiness on the left bank, with their artillery pointed, and a corps of 7000 or 8000 men, commanded by count Auersberg. The French, nevertheless, got possession of the bridge by stratagem. Murat, Lannes, Belliard, and their staff, leaving their troops behind them, crossed the bridge, told the Austrians that an armistice was agreed on, and asked to see their general. He was sent for. Meanwhile, the French officers kept the Austrian gunners in conversation, and gave time for a column of French grenadiers to come up unseen, under cover of the woods, seize the cannon, and disarm the artillerymen. The stupid Austrian commander who had come to the spot just at the critical moment, fell completely into the trap. He himself led the French column over the bridge, and ordered the Austrian troops to be drawn up on parade to receive them as friends. The possession of the bridge afforded the French troops the means of reaching Znaym sooner than Kutusof, and thus preventing his junction with Buxhövdén.

Meanwhile, Alexander had gone to Berlin, to exert his personal influence over the timorous king, and prevail on him to abandon his wretched neutral policy, in which there was neither honour, honesty, nor safety. Alexander was warmly seconded by the beautiful queen of Prussia, and by the archduke Anthony, who arrived at the same time on a special mission from Vienna. French influence rapidly declined in Berlin; Duroc left it on the 2nd of November, without having been able to obtain an audience, for some days previously, either from the king or the emperor; and on the following day a secret convention was signed between the two monarchs for the regulation of the affairs of Europe, and the erection of a barrier against the ambition of the French emperor. The Prussian minister Haugwitz, who had signed this convention only to gain time, and with a secret determination to elude its provisions, was to be entrusted with the notification of it to Napoleon, with authority, in case of its acceptance, to offer a renewal of the former friendship and alliance of the Prussian nation; but in case of refusal, to declare war, with an intimation, that hostilities would begin on the 15th of December—when they would be too late.

Before that day came, Prussia relapsed into her old temporising habits; her armies made no forward movement towards the Danube, and Napoleon was permitted to continue without interruption his advance to Vienna, while 80,000 disciplined veterans remained inactive in Silesia; a force amply sufficient to have thrown him back with disgrace and disaster to the Rhine.

A characteristic scene took place at Potsdam during Alexander's visit. The king, the queen, and the emperor, went one night by torchlight into the vault where lay the coffin of Frederick the Great. They knelt before it. Alexander's face was bathed in tears; he pressed his friend's hands, he clasped him in his arms, and together they swore eternal amity: never would they separate their cause or their fortunes. Tilsit soon showed what was the value of this oath, which probably was sincere for the moment when it was taken.

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## CHAPTER LV.

MORTIER DEFEATED — KUTUSOF'S FINESSE — BAGRATION'S HEROIC EXPLOIT — BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ — SEPARATE PEACE BETWEEN FRANCE AND AUSTRIA — ATTEMPT OF RUSSIA TO OBTAIN THE RIGHT OF PROTECTORATE OVER THE GREEK SUBJECTS OF TURKEY.

DURING the retreat of the Austrians and Russians under Kienmayer and Kutusof from Passau to Krems, the imprudence of Mortier, who had crossed to the left bank of the Danube at Linz, gave occasion to engagements at Stein and Dirnstein, in which the French lost more men than they ever acknowledged. Mortier's army of 30,000 men consisted of three divisions, under generals Gazan, Dupont, and Dumonceau. This army had positive orders to keep always near to the main body, which was pursuing its march along the right bank, and never to advance beyond it. Kutusof had long retreated on the right bank; but on the 9th of November he crossed to the left at Grein, as before mentioned, and lay in the neighbourhood of Krems, when Mortier's troops advanced. The French divisions maintained the distance of a

whole day's march one from another, because they thought they were following a fleeing army; but between Dirnstein and Stein they fell in with the whole Russian army, 20,000 strong, at a place where the French were obliged to pass through a frightful ravine. On the 11th of November, Mortier ventured to make an attack with Gazan's division alone; but between Dirnstein and Loiben (twenty hours from Vienna), he got into a narrow way, enclosed on both sides by a line of lofty walls, and there suffered a dreadful loss. When the French, about noon, at length supposed themselves to have gained some advantage, the Russians received reinforcements, outflanked the French, cut them off, and would have annihilated the whole division, had not Dupont's come up at the decisive moment. The latter division had also suffered severely on the same day. Whilst Kutusof was sharply engaged with Mortier, whose numbers were being rapidly diminished, and his cannon taken, the Austrian general, Schmidt, attacked Dupont at Stein, where the contest was as murderous as at Dirnstein, till Schmidt fell, and the French forced their way.

Kutusof, on his march to Znaym, was overtaken by the van of the French, under Belliard, near Hollabrunn; and everything depended on detaining the latter so long as might enable Kutusof to gain time for getting in advance. For this purpose, Bagration, with about 6000 men, took up a position in the rear of the main body. Nostitz served under Bagration, and had some thousand Austrians and a number of Russians under his immediate command. He occupied the village of Schöngraben, in the rear of the Russians, and in the very centre of their line of march. Belliard ought to have attacked him first; but as his corps was not superior in number to that of Bagration, he had again recourse to the expedient which he had already tried, with such signal success, at the bridge of Vienna. He entered into a parley; declared that peace with Austria was already concluded, or as good as concluded; assured them that hostilities henceforth affected the Russians alone; and by such means induced Nostitz to be guilty of a piece of treachery unparalleled in war. Nostitz, with his Austrians, forsook the Russians, even those whom he had under his own command; and they being unable to maintain the village of Schöngraben, it



was taken possession of without a shot; and Bagration and Kutusof seemed lost, for Murat's whole army was advancing upon them.

In the mean time the Russians at Hollabrunn extricated themselves from their difficulty; for they were not so stupidly credulous as the Austrians, but knew how to deceive the Gascons, by whom they were pursued, as Belliard had deceived the Austrians. For this purpose, they availed themselves of the presence in Kutusof's camp of count von Winzingerode, the adjutant-general of the emperor of Russia, who had been employed in all the last diplomatic military negotiations in Berlin. Murat having sent his adjutant to call upon Kutusof, whose line of march had come into the power of the enemy, in consequence of Nostitz's treachery in capitulating, the Russian general assumed the appearance of being desirous to negotiate, and Winzingerode betook himself to the French camp. Belliard and Murat, without taking the trouble to inquire what powers the count and Kutusof had to conclude a treaty which should be generally binding, came to an agreement with Winzingerode, by virtue of which all the Russians, within a certain number of days, were to evacuate every part of the Austrian territory. This capitulation was to be sent to the emperor Napoleon, at Schönbrunn, for confirmation; and to this condition there was necessarily attached another, for the sake of which Kutusof had commenced the whole affair. There was to be a suspension of hostilities till the arrival of Napoleon's answer; and it was agreed, that in the mean time both parties should remain in their then positions. Bagration, with 7000 or 8000 Russians, complied with this condition, and remained in his position at Hollabrunn, because he could be observed by the French; but Kutusof, with all the rest of the army, which lay at a greater distance, quietly continued his route to Znaym; and this, with a full knowledge of the danger of Bagration being afterwards overwhelmed by a superior force. On being made acquainted with the capitulation, Napoleon was enraged, for he immediately perceived how grievously his brother-in-law had suffered himself to be deceived; and he ordered an immediate attack. This was indeed made; but eighteen hours had been irreparably lost, and Kutusof gained two marches

on Murat; the whole French army, above 30,000 strong, therefore fell upon Bagration.

Bagration, who had still with him the Austrian regiment of hussars of the crown-prince of Homburg, commanded by baron von Mohr, offered a vigorous resistance to the whole French army with his 7000 or 8000 men. The Russian bombs set fire to the village in which was stationed the corps which was to fall upon Bagration's flank; the consequence was, that this corps was thrown into confusion, and the Russians opened up a way for themselves at the point of the bayonet. The Russian general, it is true, was obliged to leave his cannon in the hands of his enemy, and lost the half of his force; it must, however, always be regarded as one of the most glorious deeds of the whole campaign, that, after three days' continued fighting, he succeeded in joining the main body under Kutusof, at his head-quarters at Wischau, between Brünn and Olmütz, and, to the astonishment of all, with one-half of his little army. Even the French admit that the Russians behaved nobly, that they themselves lost a great number of men, and that, among others, Oudinot was severely wounded.

On the same day on which Bagration arrived in Wischau, a junction had been formed by Buxhövdén's army, with which the emperor Alexander was present, with the troops under Kutusof, who thenceforward assumed the chief command of the whole. Napoleon himself came to Brünn, and collected his whole army around him, well knowing that nothing but a decisive engagement could bring him safely out of the situation in which he then was, and which was the more dangerous the more splendid and victorious it outwardly appeared to be. It is beyond a doubt, that the precipitation and haughtiness of the Russians, who were eager for a decisive engagement, combined with the miserable policy of the Prussian cabinet and the cowardice of the king, as well as the fears and irresolution of the poor emperor Francis, and the want of spirit among his advisers, contributed more to the success of Napoleon's plans respecting Prussia, Germany, and Italy, than his victories in the field. A glance at the situation of affairs at the time of the battle of Austerlitz will show at once how easily he might have been stopped in his career. There was nothing Napoleon feared

more than that the Russians should march either to Hungary or to Upper Silesia, and avoid a decisive engagement; he therefore took means to ascertain the characters and views of the personal attendants and advisers of the emperor Alexander; and when he had learned that young men of foolhardy dispositions had the preponderance in his councils, he formed his plans accordingly. He first advanced from Brünn to Wischau, and afterwards retired again into the neighbourhood of Brünn, as if afraid to venture upon an attack. The emperor of Germany, as well as Napoleon, appeared seriously desirous of a peace; but the former was obliged to propose conditions which the latter could not possibly accept; and Napoleon wished first completely to set the emperor Francis free from the Russians, his allies, and from Prussia, before he came to an agreement with him. As count Stadion, who came to the head-quarters of the French on the 27th of November, with Giulay, as ambassadors to treat for peace, was a sworn enemy of Napoleon, and remained so till 1813, and had, moreover, been very instrumental in founding the whole coalition, and in maturing their plans, his appearance on this occasion was of itself no good omen for the favourable issue of the mission. The proposals made as the basis of a peace were the same as had been contemplated in the event of a victory on the part of the allies—the French were to evacuate Germany and Italy. When Napoleon sent Savary (afterwards duke of Rovigo), the head of his gendarmerie police, under pretence of complimenting the emperor Alexander, it was indisputably a great part of this envoy's object, as appears from the 30th bulletin, to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the prevailing opinions and the leading characters during the three days of his sojourn in the emperor's camp. Savary was very well received, and sent away with every courtly attention by Alexander; but it was intimated that it was intended to make common cause with Prussia, and that it was expected that Novosiltzof, whom the emperor Alexander wished to send to Napoleon, would meet Haugwitz in Brünn. The hint was sufficient to induce Savary to decline the company of Novosiltzof.

When Savary informed the emperor of the illusion of the

Russian generals, and of their belief that fears were entertained of the Russians, and that on this account embassies were sent to seek for peace—Napoleon very cunningly took care to strengthen the fools in their folly. Savary was sent again to the enemy's camp to propose an interview between Napoleon and the emperor of Russia. The interview was declined; but prince Dolgoruki was sent to propose conditions to Napoleon. The latter did not allow him to come into his camp, but received him at the outposts. If it be true that the prince behaved most rudely, and that he made the demands of which Napoleon complains so bitterly in the 30th and 31st bulletins, the Russians were certainly seized with a delusion which could not but draw them on to their destruction; but we must add, that we do not place unhesitating confidence in anything which proceeded immediately from Napoleon, or in words which are put into his mouth. In the same bulletin in which abuse is heaped upon the Russians, the English again play a part along with them—the English, who were always a thorn in Napoleon's side.

If it be asked why the Russians, with whom there were only some 20,000 Austrians, did not wait for their third army, under Benningsen, or reduce Bonaparte to the greatest perplexity, by taking up a strong position in Hungary or Upper Silesia, or remaining quietly upon the heights of Pratzen, the reply is, that the whole system of supplies was bad, and that want had reached so great a pitch, that it would have been impossible for them to remain. Certain it is, that they suffered themselves to be drawn down from the heights, and away from Austerlitz, nearer Brünn, where the talents of their generals were unable to devise any plan of battle which Napoleon could not immediately oversee; it would have been otherwise in the mountains. The French allege, that Napoleon had long before fixed upon the very place in which the Russians offered him battle at Austerlitz, on the 2nd of December, as his battle-field, and laid all his plans accordingly. The possession of the heights of Pratzen was regarded by those skilled in strategy as the key of this battle-field. The Russians were in full possession of these heights, with all their force, on the 1st of December; on the 2nd they descended from them, when Bonaparte drew back one



of the wings of his army. He had long calculated on gaining the victory by the possession of these heights, and thus rendering the retreat of the Russians impossible. He did not, therefore, fail, in the very opening of the battle, to seize upon them. A column of the third Russian army, under Benningsen, commanded by Michelson, just arrived at the decisive moment when Napoleon had also called to his aid Bernadotte's corps, and when the Bavarians were on their march from Budweis to Moravia; but none of their leaders could lay any claim to the reputation of a commander of genius. Napoleon's proclamation to his army shows his full confidence in his own superiority, as well as in that of his generals and soldiers; and this confidence was fully realised on the bloody field of Austerlitz on the 2nd of December. But though the Russians were defeated, it is certain, that had it not been for the cowardice of the emperor of Germany, and for the counsels of Lichtenstein and his associates, who sought the advantage of their emperor at the expense of his honour and the Austrian name, the victory, which the French so admirably understood how to magnify, would not have produced the effects it actually did produce. It was not the victory itself, but its consequences, which made the German princes the humble vassals of France, gave Italy into the hands of Napoleon, raised his brothers and his brother-in-law to the rank of kings, and his generals and diplomatists to that of princes.

As regards the immediate results of the battle, the Russians lost the greater part of their artillery and their army; but this loss has been so grossly exaggerated by the French, that we do not venture either to give the number of the fallen, or of those who escaped. Many, in other respects trustworthy French writers, give 54,000 as the number of the slain; and Matthieu Dumas, who does not belong to the boasters, states, that of 80,000 Russians, 40,000 fell in the battle. It is obvious, however, that these mere military official vaunts are not entitled to much credit, for the Russian accounts as absurdly diminish the amount of the loss, as those of the French extravagantly exaggerate it. Kutusof, in his account, says that he lost 12,000, and the French 18,000 men. The French reports partly refute one another,

as will appear from a single example: Buxhövden was hard pressed beside a frozen lake; some battalions retreated upon the ice, which the French broke with their artillery; so that many Russians perished, and their cannon sank into the water. The first French accounts, in order to make up the sum of 50,000 Russians fallen, will have 20,000 to have been drowned in the lake. In a second report, however, this 20,000 is reduced to 4000, and the Russians hardly admit that any of their men were lost in the lake. This is, no doubt, as incorrect as the French accounts, although we should be disposed still very much further to reduce the amount of their second report.

After the battle of Austerlitz, Napoleon found in the weak Francis II. as useful a tool as he had found in the king of Sardinia, after the battles of Montenotte and Millesimo, in 1796-1797; with this difference, that the emperor's understanding was still less vigorous than that of the king. This was evident, when Lichtenstein, after the battle, conducted the poor terrified Francis to a personal interview with the superior genius, who immediately brought him into subservience; and, as a favour, granted a cessation of hostilities, which placed the emperor of Germany, with his hands bound, in the power of the conqueror. The first condition of the truce was, that the Russians should wholly withdraw. This was the more advantageous, as, after the battle, the difficulty of supplies ceased, which was alleged as an excuse for not having taken up a strong position in Hungary or Upper Silesia, instead of risking a battle. The remains of the army would have been easily provided for. The French, indeed, allege, that the Russian army was completely surrounded, and the emperor as good as made prisoner; having owed his escape to favour, and to a pass from Napoleon, presented by general Davoust. However ungrounded this may be, all the French writers insist earnestly upon its truth (Lefebvre excepted); and the intelligent Thibaudeau is even amongst the number of those who reproach the emperor of Russia with the greatest ingratitude. The whole of the silly story of Napoleon's magnanimity towards the emperor Alexander rests upon this—that when Savary was sent to Alexander, to obtain his concurrence in the agreement

into which the poor emperor Francis had entered, the former acquiesced at once from compassion for his ally. Savary's visit furnished an opportunity to the French to invent a dialogue between him and the emperor of Russia, in which the latter is made to strew incense upon the emperor of the French, and to say things which sound marvellously strange in his mouth. The Russians, on the contrary, say that Savary had no conversation whatever with the emperor; he may, indeed, have seen him, but the dialogue is wholly apocryphal. The emperor had completely withdrawn from the reach of the pursuing French before Savary was sent.

We have already stated that the difficulty of procuring supplies was very great before the battle; this, however, might easily have been provided against in such countries as Hungary and Moravia, by the adoption of energetic measures. Kutusof's army was not so weak after the engagement as the French allege, and by a union with the force under Benningsen, would have been again as strong as before. The archduke Charles was altogether unconquered, and threatened Napoleon in the rear; for, at the very moment in which he received intelligence of the suspension of hostilities, he was about to set out for Vienna. Had Haugwitz not been compelled by the truce to hold very different language, he would have been obliged to fulfil the terms agreed upon by the king of Prussia and the archduke Anthony, on the 3rd of November. We believe ourselves, therefore, to be fully justified in saying, that all the calamitous consequences resulted from the confusion and disorder which prevailed in the whole military and civil administration of the affairs of Austria, to a degree which was almost incredible. Upon the whole, the situation of things, on the 3rd of December, was by no means so desperate as Lichtenstein made the emperor believe. Alexander lent his name to a *ruse de guerre*,\* not in order to save his army, which was not cut off from retreat, but was in full march through Urschitz, Czeitsch, and Göding, along the March, which river it afterwards crossed, but in order to

\* Davoust suffered the Russians to continue their march unmolested, on the receipt of an autograph note from the emperor of Russia to

avoid a battle with Davoust, which would certainly not have been without danger. The army had not lost *all* its artillery, although it had been obliged to relinquish two hundred pieces; and the rear was commanded by Bagerion, who was a no less able general than Davoust. Besides the archduke Charles, who threatened Vienna, and Benningsen, who was advancing, the archduke Ferdinand was in close pursuit of the Bavarians retreating from Bohemia towards Moravia; and Prussia, to its misfortune, had at length also put its army in motion. The allies were, therefore, still in a condition to try the fortunes of war with fair chances of success; but the emperor Francis preferred humbly begging for the favour of Napoleon.\* He sent prince Lichtenstein to ask for a suspension of hostilities, during which negotiations were to be carried on with a view to a peace: Napoleon granted the request, on condition of the Russians evacuating Hungary and Moravia within fourteen days, and Galicia within four weeks. We find it difficult to believe that Napoleon said and did on this occasion what we find written in bulletins and books, because we regard it as less worthy of his character and talents than the French appear to do.†

the following effect: "J'autorise le général de Meerfeldt à faire connaître au général français que les deux empereurs d'Allemagne et de France sont en conférence, qu'il y a un armistice dans cette partie, et qu'il est en conséquence inutile de sacrifier plus de braves gens."

\* The French, and particularly Thibaudeau, reason against what has been alleged in the text, as if it had ever occurred to any one to say *certainly* that the allies would have conquered; that is not the question; the question is about *venturing*. How was it after the battle of Borodino? How was it in Prussia in 1813? And in Spain in 1808?

† Napoleon is reported by all the French writers to have said to the emperor Francis: "L'armée russe cernée, pas un homme ne peut échapper; mais je désire faire une chose agréable à l'empereur Alexandre; je laisserai passer l'armée russe, j'arrêterai la marche de mes colonnes, pourvu que l'armée russe retourne en Russie, qu'elle évacue l'Allemagne, la Pologne autrichienne et russe, et que V. M. promette de ne plus me faire la guerre." "Cette promesse je vous la donne," répondit l'empereur d'Autriche; "quant à l'empereur Alexandre, son intention est de retourner en Russie avec son armée." This is differently told even in its accessory circumstances, and the people who present such things as history add, that when the emperor



By the terms of the truce the French army was to continue, till the ratification of a peace, in possession of the whole circle of Iglau, Znaym, and Brünn, together with a part of the circle of Olmütz, in Moravia; and further, of the right bank of the March, till its influx into the Danube, Presburg included. Upper and Lower Austria, the Tyrol, Venice, Carinthia, Styria, Carniola, Görz, and Istria, remained occupied: and, in Bohemia, not only the circle of Tabor, but the district lying eastward of the road from Tabor to Linz. From this third of the Austrian monarchy 100,000,000 francs were demanded for the pay and rewards of Napoleon's army; and, notwithstanding the magnitude of this demand, oppressions of other descriptions were by no means diminished. For this reason the emperor Francis willingly assented to whatever conditions were imposed, merely in order to be quit of the French, and to have his empire relieved from their oppressive occupation. The emperor Alexander generously gave his assent merely because his ally wished it; and Savary's mission proved successful in obtaining the concurrence of both emperors. The truce agreed to on the 4th by prince Lichtenstein, on the part of the Austrians, was not confirmed till the 6th, after Savary's return with the express assent of the emperor of Russia; and on the 6th, Talleyrand, Stadion, and Giulay met at Nikolsburg, to agree upon the terms of peace, which both parties were desirous of concluding as quickly as possible. This was very easily accomplished, for Napoleon laid down his terms; and the emperor Francis, being deprived of all means of resistance, was fain to agree, consoling himself with Napoleon's promise, that in two months after the ratification the whole of his states would be evacuated by the French.

After the exchange of the ratifications, Napoleon had an interview with the archduke Charles, in the castle of Stamerdorf, in which he is said to have proposed the dismemberment of Turkey, with a view of withdrawing it from the ambitious influence of Russia. The moment was not well chosen for

Francis left him, Napoleon said to his generals: "*Cet homme me fait faire une faute; j'aurais pu suivre ma victoire et prendre toute l'armée russe et autrichienne; mais quelques larmes de moins seront versées.*" What rhodomontade and affected sentimentality!

arousing the fears of Austria with respect to the continual encroachments of Russia in that quarter; and the proposal was coldly received by the archduke. Yet the apprehensions expressed by Napoleon were not groundless: in 1804, Russia had been on the point of obtaining from the divan a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive; but a clause inserted in the stipulations opened Selim's eyes. Alexander required, precisely as Nicholas did, nearly fifty years afterwards, that all the subjects of the Porte professing the Greek religion should be placed under the immediate protection of Russia. Turkey was then convulsed by insurrections, and in the worst condition to resist by force of arms; nevertheless, she refused peremptorily to submit to so monstrous a usurpation. Under other circumstances, Russia might have insisted on her iniquitous claim; but absorbed as she was in preparing for a momentous struggle with Napoleon, she reserved herself for a more favourable opportunity.

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## CHAPTER LVI.

### CAMPAIGN OF EYLAU AND FRIEDLAND.

AFTER the defeat at Austerlitz the emperor made an attempt, whether sincere or not is uncertain, for a reconciliation with Napoleon. He sent M. d'Oubril to Paris, who after a negotiation of ten days concluded a treaty with the French plenipotentiary, general Clarke (July 20, 1806). But Alexander refused to ratify the treaty, upon the very questionable allegation that his ambassador had exceeded his powers.

Prussia now suffered the just consequences of her dishonest and cowardly policy. Disappointed in her hopes of acquiring Hanover, the reward for which she crouched to Napoleon, she imprudently provoked him to war without waiting for the arrival of the aid due to her by Russia. The campaign was decided in one day by the two terrific defeats of Jena and Auerstadt (Oct. 14, 1806). Prussia was hopelessly ruined before the Russian armies, 90,000 strong, under Benningsen and Buxhöyden, could arrive to save her. The Russians en-

tered Prussia in November, and on the 26th of December the battle of Pultusk was fought with great obstinacy and loss of blood on both sides. The French spent the whole of a December night without covering; rain and snow fell incessantly; they waded up to the knees in marshes, spent twelve hours in making an advance of eight miles, and were obliged to pay dearly for their passage over the Narew. During the battle, marshal Lannes and other generals were several times obliged to put themselves at the head of single regiments and battalions, and yet no decisive advantage was gained. The French, indeed, boasted of the victory; because the Russians, after having maintained their ground on a part of the field, retreated the next day.

If the victory at Pultusk, of which Benningsen boasted, and on account of which he was afterwards rewarded by his emperor, and appointed commander-in-chief, was very doubtful; on the other hand, prince Galitzin completely defeated the French at Golymin, on the very day on which they were to attack Buxhövdén, at Ostrolenka. This victory, too, was the more glorious, inasmuch as the Russians were less numerous than their opponents. The French, however, had not been able to bring up their artillery; and the superiority of the Russians in this particular decided the event.\* The weather and the time of the year rendered active operations impossible for some weeks. Benningsen retired to Ostrolenka, and afterwards still farther; whilst the French, under Ney and Bernadotte, were scattered in the country on the farther side of the Vistula, in which Ney at length pushed forward as far as Heilsberg.

In January, 1807, Benningsen and Napoleon came, almost simultaneously, upon the idea of changing the seat of war from the extreme east to the west. In the east, the struggle was afterwards carried on by two particular corps—a Russian, under Essen, and a French, first under Lannes, and then under Savary. This bloody struggle, however, had no influence on the issue of the war. Benningsen no sooner learned that Ney had scattered his troops widely over the

\* The French, indeed, do not hesitate to repeat the shameful rhodomontade of the 47th bulletin, which states that in the battles of the 26th the Russians lost 80 pieces of artillery, all their *caissons*, 1200 baggage waggons, and 12,000 men in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

country on the farther side of the Vistula, than he broke up his quarters, and resolved to attack him, before Bernadotte, who was near, could come to his relief; but he was too late. Ney had already retreated when Benningsen arrived; whether it was as the French allege, because Napoleon, who had seen the danger with which he was threatened, sent him orders to retreat, which arrived on the very day on which he was to be attacked by the Russians, or that General Markof was at first too eager, and Benningsen afterwards too irresolute. Ney luckily marched from Heilsberg, nearer to the Vistula, and Benningsen followed him hesitatingly, so that Bernadotte was able to keep him employed for some days till Napoleon came up. On receiving news of Benningsen's march, the French emperor had sent orders to all his corps to renew the campaign on the 27th, and he had so taken his measures, that before the Russians had any suspicion of an attack, the main army of the French would fall upon their left flank, whilst they were on their march. For this purpose, Bernadotte was to allure Benningsen quite to the Vistula; and then to advance again as soon as Napoleon had outflanked the left of the Russians.

The despatch containing these orders for Bernadotte fell into the hands of the Russians, through the inexperience of the officer entrusted with it, who failed to destroy the document at the right time. Thus warned of the impending danger, and finding themselves pressed on all sides, they allowed their stores and heavy baggage, at various places, to fall into the hands of the enemy, and thereby escaped being surrounded. After considerable sacrifices, they succeeded, on the 6th of February, in reaching the Prussian town of Eylau, which is only nine hours' distance from Königsberg. Soult attacked their rear, on the low hills behind the town, on the 7th, and drove them in; on the following day a general engagement took place. The honour of the victory is probably due to the Russians, as even Savary admits, who shared in the battle.\* It is not less certain, however, that the

\* The Bonapartists (and Thibaudeau also), as usual, throw the blame upon Bernadotte. Benningsen, however, affirms what is said in the text. A still fuller account of the same affair will be found in the *Mémoires du duc de Rovigo*, vol. iii. p. 50, &c. The duke (Savary) on that occasion commanded the fifth corps, Lannes being ill. Rüchel,



whole advantage accrued to the French, who, indeed, admit that the battle was one of the most dreadful recorded in history. The French accuse Bernadotte of having, by his delay, prevented the victory from being complete; whilst the Russians are just enough to admit that Lestocq, with his Prussians, saved their wing from utter defeat. The number of deaths in the battle, and on the day preceding it, was immense. Great numbers fell, not by the sword, but by cold, want, and excessive exertion. Whole battalions and regiments of the French—as, for example, that of colonel Sémelé—were literally annihilated. Few prisoners were made, because the whole battle was fought with the bayonet.

The royal family of Prussia was placed in a very melancholy position by the issue of the battle, for they were obliged, in the middle of winter, to flee to Memel, where they found themselves among Russians, of whom their own emperor alleged, that, notwithstanding his despotic power, he was not able to restrain their barbarity, or to put a stop to their rapacity. Here, in the farthest corner of Prussia, they received news every month of the fall of one fortress after another, or of forced contributions levied upon their people.

The French army also retired after the battle of Eylau as well as the Russians. Benningsen marched towards Königsberg, and although Berthier, on the morning of the 7th, wrote to the empress that they would be in Königsberg with their army on the following day, the French, nevertheless, drew off nearer to the Vistula. Nothing important was undertaken by either party for some months, but vigorous preparations were made for a new struggle; whilst new means were tried to prevent Prussia from taking any energetic measures—that is, from forming a close union with England and Russia. The king hesitated between the bold advice of Hardenberg and his friends, and the unconditional submission to the will of Napoleon, which was recommended by

in his memoir, dated on the 28th of February, states that the French had 30,000 killed, and 12,000 wounded. Napoleon gives the numbers 1900 killed and 5700 wounded. Rüchel adds: “The victory at Prussian Eylau was complete and decisive on the side of the Russians; and yet Benningsen did not pursue the enemy with the whole of his force, but, to the astonishment of the whole world, again retreated.”

von Zastrow. The Russians were thoroughly dissatisfied with the English, and complained of being very badly supported by them; they suffered want of all kinds, were worse treated in many places in Prussia than the French, and even borrowed 660,000 dollars in coin from the king of Prussia. The support which Prussia received from England might rather be called an alms than a subsidy. This was partly owing to the delays which von Zastrow promoted, and partly to the distrust of the Prussians, which the English still entertained. It was only when Hardenberg was called to office, and when Beyme agreed with him, that the English showed themselves ready to co-operate efficiently.

Hardenberg, who accompanied his master to Tilsit, succeeded in having a new treaty entered into at Bartenstein between Russia and Prussia. Its principle was the same as that of the agreement made on the 12th of October, of the preceding year, at Grodno, by virtue of which the emperor bound himself to support the cause of the king with all his forces. In this treaty, it was not only promised, just as if they were before Paris, that Prussia should receive back all that had been lost, but it was formally determined what was to be done with the conquests wrested from France, and how even the left bank of the Rhine was to be partitioned among the allies. This partition of conquests not yet made is merely ridiculous; what was important, on the contrary, was, that Russia and Prussia not only reckoned confidently upon England and Sweden, but also upon Austria, and intimated that they would compel Denmark also to join the alliance. The part which Austria played on this occasion was very equivocal. This ought not to surprise any one, since already, under the Whigs, there had been some talk of a congress and of Austrian mediation, which no one could fully understand. On the 7th of May, sir Robert Adair writes that Napoleon had accepted the mediation. On the 8th, he at length received the news that Canning had become minister of foreign affairs; and the very first despatch from the new minister announced the prosecution of the war, and a firm alliance with Russia; but, before Canning was able to give effect to his words, the battle of Friedland was fought. It appears, from Napoleon's correspondence, that, on the 17th, he gave Talleyrand a sketch of the principles to be

contended for in the congress; they were as chimerical as was the congress itself. He demanded reciprocity—that is, that the English and Russians were to indemnify his allies, as he theirs; he knew right well, however, that the English would not agree to any such condition.

Long before the negotiations between Prussia and England, concerning a regular peace and formal subsidies, instead of the occasional sums hitherto granted, had been brought to a close, Hardenberg was installed in the office of minister of foreign affairs, and had associated with himself such men as von Altenstein, Niebuhr, von Schön, and Stegman; still, however, he entertained but little hope, especially since the English at first refused to grant more than 100,000*l.* as a subsidy to Prussia, and an equal amount to Russia. In the mean time, it proved a great gain to Prussia and its service, that Scharnhorst and von Gneisenau began that career which afterwards turned out so salutary to the army, then newly to be raised and organised. It was also a lucky accident that marshal Victor fell into the hands of a body of Prussian troops from Colberg, and was exchanged for Blücher, who was then appointed to march from Pomerania against the French, as soon as Benningsen, with the main army, had made an attack in front upon the French, commanded by Napoleon in person. The English had promised to reinforce the Swedish army in Pomerania with 30,000 men, and Prussia was also to send an army thither under Blücher. Five thousand Prussians really appeared; but the English delayed till it was too late, and were not in the wrong, because the king of Sweden, with whom it was impossible to do anything, wished to take the command.

About this time Benningsen was appointed commander-in-chief of the Russian armies; but he is generally accused of incapacity, and fearful descriptions are given of the disorders, fraud, and embezzlement which prevailed, and of the plunder and barbarity which they practised against unfortunate Prussia. We could not believe these accounts, did not all the works on Russia, which have recently appeared in England, France, and Germany, concur in proving that these evils are the result of the nature of the Russian government and its autocracy. The emperor Alexander, as soon as he arrived at the army, did everything in his power to restore

order; he was only able, however, to remedy single abuses; even Nicholas, who manifests a degree of severity from which Alexander shrank back, is not able to reach the source of the evil. Towards the end of May, Benningsen thought his troops already sufficiently reinforced to make an attack upon the French, and drive them across the Vistula; whilst the combined army of English, Swedes, and Prussians, were to make an attack from Pomerania. The French army, lying from Dantzic to the Narew, was brought, before the beginning of June, when the campaign commenced, to 150,000 men, whose pay and sustenance were drawn from the requisitions and contributions imposed on Prussia. In April, 1807, the French senate passed a decree levying 80,000 conscripts, 60,000 of whom were to be immediately sent to the army; and the Poles, too, deceived by the hope of the restoration of their nationality, raised a body of between 25,000 and 30,000 men, among whom were whole regiments recruited by the Polish nobility, or formed exclusively of nobles who volunteered their service, although Napoleon limited all the expectations of the Poles to the country on this side of the Vistula.

As soon as Benningsen, in the beginning of June, made a serious movement in advance towards the Vistula, a series of murderous engagements began, similar to those which preceded the battle of Eylau; on the 9th, the main body of both armies came in sight of each other at Heilsberg, and on the 10th the French made an attempt to drive the Russians from their position. The united corps of Soult and Lannes, supported by the cavalry under Murat, made repeated attempts to force the Russians to give way; they, however, kept their ground, and it was confidently expected that the attempts of the French, which had failed on the 10th, would be renewed on the 11th. The French give very good reasons why Napoleon had as little inclination to renew the contest as Benningsen. We shall quote the words of a writer of the Napoleon school, who, on this occasion, neither lies nor boasts: "On the 11th the two armies were so near as to be within grape-shot range, and it appeared as if the struggle would again commence. That, however, neither of the commanders wished. Benningsen, weakened by a considerable loss of men, was afraid that his right wing might be cut off from Königsberg, and he therefore retired from his fortified



position at Heilsberg on the morning of the 11th." (He also hoped, by this movement, to form an earlier junction with the division sent to Königsberg, under Labanof, and anticipate the arrival of Napoleon's reserves.) "Napoleon had, however, no reason to risk the loss of so many men, by an attempt to storm the fortified position of the Russians, as he was sure that as soon as he threatened Königsberg the Russians would give up their trenches."

Benningsen afterwards heard, at Wehlau, that the French had separated into two divisions, and he resolved on the 13th, instead of continuing his route on the farther side of the Alle, to wheel about before Wehlau, and attack the French. By this step, as all writers admit, he gave himself into the hands of his great opponent, who never suffered his enemy to commit a fault with impunity. The position taken up by Benningsen was such as to leave him no alternative between victory and destruction, for he had the Alle in his rear, and a marsh on one flank. Napoleon took advantage of this mistake, as usual; and the orders which he issued before the battle prove that he was sure of the victory. About five o'clock in the evening of the 14th of June, a battery of twenty guns gave the signal for the fight; it was bravely maintained on both sides, and both armies suffered great loss. The French accounts exaggerate, to a most extraordinary extent, the number of the Russians who were led into the battle of Friedland, as well as the number of prisoners:\* certain it is, however, that 17,000 Russians were either killed or wounded.†

After the battle of Friedland, there was no longer any account to be taken of the Prussians; and it was a piece of great good fortune that such a sovereign as Alexander reigned

\* The statements in the note to the "*Geschichte des Kriegs von Preussen und Russland gegen Frankreich in den Jahren 1806 and 1807*" (Berlin, 1835), p. 249, appear the most probable: "At the recommencement of hostilities the Russian army amounted to 75,000 fighting men, from which, if we deduct 10,000 previously lost, as well as the corps of Kamenskoi, only about 55,000 could have been brought into the field at Friedland."

† The French and the bulletins, according to their custom, add to the 17,000 killed and wounded, "AND AS MANY TAKEN PRISONERS," when, in fact, no prisoners were taken, as was natural, from the nature and locality of the battle.

in Russia, otherwise Prussia would have been wholly lost. Lestocq, with his Prussians, was obliged hastily to cross the Haaff to Memel; and their magazines, considerable stores of powder and ammunition, together with 100,000 muskets, which the English had sent by sea to Königsberg, fell, with the town, into the hands of the French. Benningsen was not very closely pursued on the other side of the Alle; he passed the Niemen on the 19th, and burnt down the bridge behind him; immediately afterwards, Bonaparte arrived in Tilsit. Of all the Prussian fortresses, Colberg alone might have been able to maintain itself for some weeks, and Graudenz was saved merely by the peace. The treaty with England, which the Prussian minister signed in London on the 17th of June, and by which 1,000,000*l.* sterling was promised in subsidies, came too late.

Schladen informs us that all those who were about the king of Prussia had so completely lost courage, that von Hardenberg, von Stein, Schladen himself, and many others who recommended perseverance, found none upon whom they could reckon. With respect to the Russians, he informs us that there was a party who assumed a threatening aspect—that the army was dissatisfied with the war—that the grand-duke Constantine behaved often very rudely towards the Prussians, and allowed himself to be used as an instrument for working on the fears of his brother Alexander.\* On the 7th of June, the emperor manifested a disposition altogether contrary to the agreements and partition-projects of the convention of Bartenstein. He was dissatisfied with England, and perceived that the Austrians had no other object than to fish in troubled water, and he was, therefore, desirous, as much as possible, to withdraw from the whole affair. He proposed

\* *Preussen*, p. 277. Von Schladen, under date of the 7th of June, observes: "People here (Tilsit) remark a surprising alteration in the opinions of the Russian authorities, and of all those who have any influence with the emperor; and it is obvious that they wish for a peace. It is a question whether his imperial majesty possesses strength of mind enough to stand upright alone, in the midst of such a circle as that by which he is surrounded. The emperor has assured the minister, von Hardenberg, that he will go for a time to Wilna, to hasten the arrival of Russian reinforcements and provisions, but will soon be here again, and that no one shall induce him to depart from the path which he has proposed to himself."

a truce for himself, with a clause that the Prussians also should obtain a cessation of hostilities; but the Russians and Prussians were to negotiate each for themselves respecting the conditions. Napoleon having entertained the proposal, Russia agreed, that during the continuance of the truce, the French should retain possession of the whole of Poland, except the circle of Bialystock. The agreement was signed on the 21st, and a four weeks' notice of the renewal of hostilities was reserved. By the terms of the truce granted to Prussia, the French remained in possession of the whole kingdom; and the few fortresses which were not yet reduced, were not to be supplied either with new works, ammunition, or provisions. Blücher, who commanded the Prussian auxiliary forces in Pomerania, was to leave the king of Sweden to his fate. The peace was to be negotiated at Tilsit, and for that purpose one-half of the town was to be declared neutral.

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## CHAPTER LVII.

### TREATY OF TILSIT—CONQUEST OF FINLAND.

NAPOLEON had a much easier game to play with the emperor Alexander than with the good emperor Francis of Austria. The former was an idealist and mystic, who idolised men and women, after his visionary fashion, and afterwards let them fall in the mud in order to follow the same course towards others, whom in their turn he neglected as quickly as their predecessors. The emperor Francis was a plain matter-of-fact man, and had neither an idea nor a fancy; he was therefore not to be taken on that side. Alexander had previously held the king of Prussia in a sort of enthusiastic admiration as a pious and honourable man; he now exhibited a degree of veneration, bordering on idolatry, for Napoleon, as a hero and a ruler. The first meeting, therefore, of the two emperors, on the raft constructed on the Niemen for the occasion, was altogether calculated to produce a great effect upon the romantic disposition of the Russian emperor; we, however, leave to the French the rhetorical and dramatic details of the first greeting, and make no pretension to rival

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them in depicting such scenes. We are somewhat surprised, indeed, at the great importance laid by them on every word spoken (and also not spoken) by the emperor Alexander, since they themselves have repeated without end, that their Napoleon declared Alexander to be as false as a Byzantine Greek. The king of Prussia was not present at the first meeting on the 25th, which lasted some hours; he was, however, at the second, which took place on the next day. The negotiations respecting the peace began on the 28th, and the king of Prussia, during their course, played merely a subordinate part. The emperor of Russia, with all his religious sentimentality, was as great a stranger to the true principles of morality as his opponent; he suffered himself to be won, by having his attention directed to Turkish, and especially to Swedish provinces, almost indispensable to the safety of his capital, and consented to be enriched, even at the expense of his friend the king of Prussia. He appeared at the same time as a friend of the Prussian royal family, and as a worshipper of Napoleon, who had treated them with the greatest cruelty.

The peace of Tilsit\* was arranged on the special meetings between Alexander and Napoleon, after the king of Prussia had retired. The actual treaty was afterwards settled by Talleyrand, with princes Labanof and Kurakin. Talleyrand, on the other hand, dictated, word for word, the peace for Prussia, to counts Kalkreuth and Golz, who had full powers to conclude it. Besides the two patent treaties, there were secret articles added to that between France and Russia,

\* The treaty is given in Martens, vol. iv. p. 436; but essential portions are wanting. Bignon also denies the existence of these essential points. The author of the article "Alexandre," in the "Biographie Universelle," vol. lvi. (supplement), alleges that he has given them for the first time; but they are not even there in a full, authentic form. Schnitzler, in the notes to his "Histoire intime de la Russie," No. x. vol. i. p. 445, has reprinted the article from the "Biographie." Lefebvre, in vol. iii. of his "Histoire des Cabinets de l'Europe," quotes everything which was agreed on either positively or contingently—even what affected Sicily, the partition of the Turkish empire, and the combined expedition of the Russians and French against the English East Indies, but says nothing of the quarter whence he derived his information, or how much of it was really written down.



some of which, in part verbally agreed upon and in part written, have been steadfastly denied, and were never officially published. Most of them, such as the joint expedition to India, and the partition of the territories of powers not engaged in the war, are so extravagant, that we cannot help doubting that such things were even seriously meant; still, much was done, and that was bad enough.

If we might draw a line of distinction more minutely, in a case in which the originals of the treaties are not before us, we might say that there were, properly speaking, one patent, and three secret treaties concluded with Russia, which were, at later periods, partly acknowledged and partly denied. We shall proceed to give all that is known of these secret agreements, or is given by the director in the department of foreign affairs, who has written the history of the cabinets of Europe, as the summary of the results of the verbal consultations between the two emperors.

In the patent treaty, a compliment is paid the emperor of Russia; Napoleon, for his sake, agreeing that Prussia should lose only some four millions and a half of subjects, and one-half its income. The city of Dantzic, occupied by the French with a small army, and ruled by a French governor, is declared to be a free republic, and a territory assigned it of some six or eight miles in circumference. The king of Prussia shall allow a military road from Saxony to Warsaw, and neither Prussia nor Saxony shall impose or collect any tolls on the Vistula. The new republic of Dantzic is to be placed under the protection of the king of Saxony (for whom Warsaw is to be erected into a duchy) and of the emperor of the French, who remains master of the town, and furnishes an army, whose commander-in-chief is to have unlimited rule over everything. That portion of Poland which on the last partition had fallen to Prussia, shall form the duchy of Warsaw, which France cedes to the king of Saxony. From the part of Poland, however, thus wrested again from Prussia, the district between the Bug, the Lassassna, and the Bobra, as well as the districts of Bialystock, Bielsk, and Debriczyn, are to be given over to Russia, which is thus to share in the spoil of her ally. Oldenburg, Coburg, and Mecklenburg are to be restored to their princes, with this reserve alone, that the harbours in Oldenburg and Mecklenburg are to re-

main in the hands of the French till the establishment of a general peace. The emperor Alexander acknowledges Louis Bonaparte as king of Holland, and Joseph Bonaparte as king of Naples, the confederation of the Rhine, and the titles and possessions of the individual princes who compose it; and thus quietly gives up Orange, Fulda, Piedmont, and Naples, and all the demands which Russia had made on behalf of these princes since 1803. Alexander also recognises Napoleon's brother, Jerome, as king of Westphalia—as rightful possessor of the kingdom hastily formed out of the patrimonial states of German princes. Alexander cedes to Holland the lordship of Jever, which his grandmother, Catharine, as a princess of Zerbst, had inherited from her brother; and Holland also receives East Friesland from Prussia. In order to deceive Austria, all sorts of settlements were afterwards made in reference to the peace with the Turks, as well as to Moldavia and Wallachia; all which were abolished, and declared null, by a secret treaty agreed to at the same moment.

The first of the secret treaties changed the simple treaty of peace into an alliance, offensive and defensive, according to the conditions of which Napoleon gave up the Turkish empire, with the exception of Constantinople\* and its neighbourhood, to the Russians; while they, on their part, unconditionally acknowledged whatever Bonaparte might choose further to undertake on the continent. In another article, Alexander promised his assistance against England, and his

\* “One day the two emperors, on their return from a long ride, shut themselves up in Napoleon's cabinet, where there were numerous maps spread out. Napoleon, apparently in brisk conversation with Alexander, asked M. Meneval for the map of Turkey, opened it, then renewing the conversation, and placing his finger suddenly on Constantinople, said several times, without regarding his being heard by the secretary, in whom he had perfect confidence, ‘Constantinople! Constantinople! never! It is the empire of the world.’”—*Thiers' Hist. of the Consulate and Empire*. Alexander pressed hard to have Constantinople. He could not be satisfied “without the keys of his house,” the Dardanelles. Speaking of Alexander at St. Helena, Napoleon said, “He coveted it (Constantinople) much, and would have cajoled me on the subject, but I always turned a deaf ear. That empire, impaired as it is, formed the point of separation; it was the marsh which prevented my flank from being turned. As to Greece, that is another affair.”

accession to the continental system. He consented, not only to close all his ports against the English, and to forbid all trade, but also that Sweden (whose destruction was verbally agreed on, the intention being to divide it between Russia and Denmark) was to be forced to co-operate, and close all the ports of the Baltic, or be reduced by war.

The second secret treaty—the existence of which Bignon boldly denies, although Savary appeals to it in reference to Spain and Portugal, and although the English did so, in the manifesto which they issued immediately after their expedition against Denmark, gave up Portugal and Spain, Malta, and the north coast of Africa, to Napoleon's arbitrary disposal. The Russians might, indeed, have very well subscribed all this, even if they had been enemies of Napoleon, because these colossal plans were prodigiously wild, and must have necessarily ended in the same manner as the winter campaign against Moscow. The English applied a very considerable sum, as they had done once before, to purchase a transcript of this secret treaty from the French department of foreign affairs. They never published the text of the purchased treaty; they alleged, however, that by virtue of an article in it, Denmark was to be compelled to give up her fleet to France, and was to receive compensation for the loss by the possession of the Hanse Towns.

In the third secret treaty, the evacuation of Cattaro, and the cession of the republic of the Ionian Islands, was promised to France; and in another article, a new signification was given to the acknowledgment of Joseph Bonaparte as king of Naples. He was acknowledged as king of Naples and Sicily; and Ferdinand IV. was to be compensated for the loss of Sicily, by the island of Candia, the north coast of Africa, and the Balearic isles; that is, by possessions in the moon. In other secret articles, Napoleon is said to have agreed, even as his friends admit, that although the article of the secret treaty, in reference to the partition of Turkey, was not to be fixed, on account of Austria, the emperor of the French was not to insist upon the evacuation of Moldavia and Wallachia, as settled in the public treaty, and not even to throw obstructions in the way of any further conquests made from the Turks. In the celebrated conversation which Napoleon had in Bayonne with canon Escoiquiz,

the notoriously knavish mentor of Ferdinand VII. of Spain, he alleged that the emperor of Russia, at Tilsit, had also approved of the expulsion of the house of Bourbon from Spain, and the house of Braganza from Portugal.\* As to Prussia, the main points of the peace to be concluded with the king were already contained in the treaty with Russia, and only a few remaining points, which we shall presently mention, were to be added; which, as Napoleon says, was conceded to Prussia merely out of friendship to Russia. Concerning the honour, or regard to common morality and the outward appearance of right, of which the two emperors gave a conspicuous example to the whole world, on this occasion, a distinguished French diplomatist pronounces his opinion in terms even as strong as we ourselves would be disposed to use, judging, as we do, from the point of view of plebeian morality.†

By the peace with Prussia, which was signed on the 9th of July, the king received back a kingdom, reduced by one-half, and even the future possession of this was in no way secured. Prussia was deprived of all her possessions between the Elbe and the Rhine, and, on the east of the Elbe, South Prussia, New East Prussia, New West Prussia, and the circle of Cöthbus, in Lusatia. Out of this territory, taken away from

\* "L'empereur Alexandre, à qui j'ai fait part à Tilsit de mes projets sur l'Espagne, qui remontent à cette époque, les approuva; j'ai reçu sa parole d'honneur qu'il ne s'y opposera pas." See Appendix to De Pradt's *Mémoires*, "Sur la Révolution de l'Espagne."

† Lefebvre, "*Histoire des Cabinets de l'Europe*," vol. iii. p. 114. "Jamais il ne fut donné aux hommes d'assister à un tel spectacle; mais toute cette grandeur ne nous éblouit point. Jamais les combinaisons de la force matérielle ne prévalurent avec plus d'audace sur les principes du droit et de l'équité; jamais on ne vit des pouvoirs humains disposer avec une autorité plus arbitraire des destinées des peuples, violer avec un plus effroyable cynisme cette morale vulgaire qui défend de sacrifier l'ami qui s'est dévoué à vous et qui a reçu vos serments. Toute notre âme se révolte à la vue de ces deux souverains, les plus puissants de ce monde, hier ennemis acharnés, alliés aujourd'hui, donnant pour ciment à leur union l'ingratitude et la déloyauté, se livrant mutuellement, à l'exemple des triumvirs de Rome, les dépoüilles de leurs propres alliés que naguère ils avaient arrachés à leur repos et traînés violemment à leur suite dans l'arène des combats—nouvelle et terrible leçon, qui apprend aux peuples à quel prix s'achètent les conquêtes et la grandeur."



Prussia, there was erected the duchy of Warsaw for the elector of Saxony, elevated to the rank of king; and, notwithstanding the much-lauded constitution granted to the duchy, it merely continued an advanced post against Russia and Austria, and was completely exhausted by dotations and the reservation of domains for French soldiers, courtiers, and diplomatists. In addition to the loss of territory, and enormous exactions in money, other very hard conditions were imposed on Prussia, especially ingratitude towards England. Russia and France had entered into a regular alliance against that power, and resolved to shut all their ports against her ships, and prevent trade of all kinds with her: Prussia was compelled to do the same. They did not stop even here. Conditions were to be proposed which they knew England would reject; and it was agreed, that if these conditions were not accepted by the end of November, war was to be declared. The king of Sweden, too, was to fall a sacrifice to this alliance. His kingdom was to be divided between Denmark and Russia, provided he did not join the alliance; and this, it was well known beforehand, he would refuse to do. In all this the king of Prussia was compelled to concur, and to promise that he, too, would declare war, in December, against England.

It has been affirmed in a Russian state paper that the peace of Tilsit was concluded to save the Prussian monarchy; but if this was the only object, it is difficult to understand how the surest means of obtaining it should have been in Alexander's personal aggrandisement. In adopting Napoleon's continental system, and helping to impose it on his neighbours, Alexander overlooked the interests of his own country. "Assuredly," says Schnitzler, "he bought the peace of Tilsit at a price much more heavy than would have been paid by a disastrous campaign. Nothing could be more menacing and serious to Russia than a rupture with England. That manufacturing country is the chief market for her raw materials. The Russian proprietors, kept continually poor by their habits of pomp and ostentation, are always eager to sell, and cannot at best find sufficient market for their produce; accordingly, the two countries are necessary the one to the other. The commerce established by the ordinance of nature is advantageous to England, but it is indispensable to the Rus-

sians ; and the czar should have had very weighty reasons to offer for putting a stop to it."

The English government, alleging that in the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, of which they had possessed themselves, they had proof of Napoleon's design to seize the Danish fleet, fitted out an expedition against Denmark with extraordinary celerity. Copenhagen was bombarded for three days, and a great part of the city destroyed. The Danes then capitulated (September 7), and surrendered their fleet to the English, with all the naval stores in their arsenals and dockyards. The conduct of our government in this matter was censured at the time with great severity ; nor can it be distinctly justified, since it is the very nature of all preventive war to destroy the very arguments and evidences of its necessity. Nevertheless, if on the one hand we consider what was requisite for carrying into execution the system of European blockade against our commerce which Napoleon had devised, and if, on the other hand, we examine into his conduct a short time after against Spain and Portugal, it is impossible not to excuse England.\*

The expedition against Copenhagen was soon followed by a declaration of war on the part of Russia against England. In the manifesto published on this occasion (September 16), Alexander complained bitterly of the bad faith of England, as manifested especially in the little aid she had afforded to the allies who had taken up arms in a cause in which she was more directly interested than any other power, and in the robber-like act of aggression she had committed against Denmark. He annulled all former conventions between Russia and England, especially that of 1801 ; proclaimed anew the principle of the armed neutrality ; and declared that there should be no communication between the two powers until Denmark had received just compensation, and peace was concluded between France and England. In consequence of this declaration, an embargo was laid on all the English vessels in Russian ports, and Prussia was compelled to follow this example.

It was not till the 6th of October that a formal demand was made upon Sweden to close the ports of the Baltic against English ships and trade. The king persevered in his alliance

\* Koch, "Revolutions of Europe."

with England ; and finally, because the emperor of Russia had conferred upon Napoleon the order of St. Andrew, he sent back his insignia ; whereupon Alexander not only returned his Swedish order, but quietly adopted measures to take possession of Finland, whilst the Danes were preparing, in concert with the French, to invade the western provinces of Sweden. Although in the months of November and December, Gustavus repeatedly declined the proposals of the Russians for a union against England, everything went on in Sweden as in times of the most profound peace ; and even when the Russian forces were collected on the very frontiers of Finland, the unfortunate king adopted no measures of defence whatever. On the 21st of January he was, for the last time, called upon to declare war against England ; he replied by concluding a new alliance with her on the 8th of February. On the 21st, the Russians invaded Finland, without any specific declaration of war, and on the 14th of March, 1808, Denmark declared war against Sweden. The whole of Finland as far as Vasa, the island of Aland, and even the islands of Gothland, Abo, Sveaborg, and all the fortresses, were taken possession of by the Russians even before the Swedish army and fleet were prepared. It was not till the end of April and beginning of May that a Swedish army under Klingspor and Adlercreuz, supported by a Swedish fleet, appeared in the field, and fought with various success.

We have lately seen Nicholas take military possession of the Danubian provinces as a “material guarantee,” whilst affecting not to be at war with Turkey. This was in exact conformity with Russian precedents. Finland, as we have said, was occupied without a declaration of war ; but manifestoes were issued by general Buxhövdén, one of which contained the following passage : “ Good neighbours, it is with the greatest regret that my most gracious master, the emperor of all the Russias, sees himself forced to send into your country the troops under my orders. But his majesty the king of Sweden, whilst withdrawing more and more from the happy alliance of the two greatest empires in the world, draws closer his connexions with the common enemy, whose oppressive system and unparalleled conduct towards the most intimate allies of Russia and of Sweden herself, cannot

be coolly endured by his imperial majesty. These motives, as well as the regard which his imperial majesty owes to the safety of his own states, oblige him to place your country *under his protection*, and to take possession of it in order to procure by these means a *sufficient guarantee* in case his Swedish majesty should persevere in the resolution not to accept the equitable conditions of peace that have been proposed to him, &c."

When the Russians took possession of Finland, the king gave them a pretence for incorporating it with their empire, which, however, they would no doubt have done in any case. He caused Alopaeus, the Russian ambassador, to be arrested. This took place on the 3rd of March, and on the 25th a declaration was published on the part of the emperor of Russia, announcing to all the powers that "from that moment he regards the part of Finland hitherto reputed Swedish, and which his troops had only been able to occupy after divers battles, as a province conquered by his arms, and that he unites it for ever to his empire."

It was easy to anticipate that the superior force of the Russians must in the end prevail; although the Russian garrison in Gothland, and that in the island of Aland, were at first taken prisoners, the island occupied, and the Russians beaten by land at Vasa on the 26th of July, and by sea at Roggerwick on the 26th of August. The Swedes lost all the advantages they had thus gained by the bloody battle fought at Ormais on the 14th of September, and by the defeat at Lokalar, on the 18th. The Russian generals, probably in order to give courage to the malcontents, who were very numerous in Sweden, issued orders not to receive any letters or any flags of truce which were sent in the king's name, and carried on negotiations with the Swedish generals alone, for a suspension of arms, which was concluded for an indefinite time, on the 20th of September, but only continued till the 27th of October, when the Russians resumed hostilities, and the Swedes were driven to the north, across the Kemistrom. On the 20th of November a new truce was agreed upon between the Swedish general Adlercreutz and the Russian general Kamenskoi, with the reserve of fourteen days' notice before renewal of operations. By the conditions



of this agreement, the Swedes were to evacuate the whole of Uleaborg, and to retire completely behind the Kemistrom, with all their artillery, arms, and stores.

On the 13th of March in the following year a revolution was effected in Sweden, by which Gustavus was deposed; his uncle, the duke of Sudermania, became regent, and was afterwards proclaimed king (June 5, 1809) under the title of Charles XIII. At Stockholm the people flattered themselves that the dethronement of Gustavus would speedily bring peace to Sweden; but it was not so. Alexander refused to treat with a government so insecure as a regency, and hostilities continued. General Knorring, who had passed the Gulf of Bothnia on the ice with 25,000 Russians, took possession of the Aland islands, and granted the Swedes a cessation of hostilities, to allow them time to make overtures of peace. Apprised of this arrangement, Barclay de Tolly, who had crossed the gulf with another body of Russians towards Vasa, and taken possession of Umea, evacuated West Bothnia, and returned to Finland. A third Russian army, under Shuvalof, penetrated into West Bothnia by the Torneo route, and compelled the Swedish army of the north under Gripenberg to lay down their arms at Seiwis (March 25). This sanguinary affair occurred entirely through ignorance; because in that country, lying under the 66th degree of north latitude, they were not aware of the armistice granted by Knorring. On the expiry of the truce, hostilities began again in May, and the Russians took possession of the part of West Bothnia lying north of Umea.

The peace between Russia and Sweden was signed at Fredericksham on the 17th of September. The latter power adhered to the continental system, reserving to herself the importation of salt and such colonial produce as she could not do without. She surrendered Finland, with the whole of East Bothnia, and a part of West Bothnia lying eastward of the river Torneo. The cession of these provinces, which formed the granary of Sweden, and contained a population of 900,000 souls, was an irreparable loss to that kingdom, which had only 2,344,000 inhabitants left. In the following year Bernadotte, prince of Ponte Corvo, was elected crown-prince of Sweden, and eventual successor to the throne, under the name of Charles John.

The loss of Finland had been but slightly retarded by some advantages gained over the Russian fleet by the combined squadrons of England and Sweden. The Russian vessels remained blockaded on the coast of Esthonia, but in an unassailable position, from which they were at last delivered by the weather and the exigencies of navigation in those dangerous seas. Another Russian fleet under admiral Siniavin, which sailed to Portugal to co-operate with the French against the English, was obliged to surrender to admiral Cotton after the convention of Cintra. It was afterwards restored to Russia. The war declared by that power against England in 1807, was little more than nominal, and was marked by no events of importance.

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## CHAPTER LVIII.

### WAR WITH PERSIA—WITH TURKEY—FRAUDULENT PROCEEDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE DANUBIAN PROVINCES.

THE annexation of Georgia to Russia, effected in the beginning of Alexander's reign, drew him into a war with Persia, which did not terminate until 1813. The principal events of that war were the defeat of the Persians at Etchmiazin by prince Zitzianof (June 20, 1804): the conquest of the province of Shirvan by the same commander (January, 1806); the taking of Derbent by the Russians (July 3); and the defeat of the Persians by Paulucci, at Alkolwalaki (September 1, 1810).

Before speaking of the war between Russia and the Porte, it will be well to take a brief retrospect of their mutual relations. Turkey was much earlier threatened with partition than Poland; it was, however, more important to the English to maintain the independence of the Turkish empire than that of the republic of Poland, and it was, besides, easier to assist the Turks than the Poles. Joseph II. and Catharine II. had agreed, at Kherson, on the fall of the Turkish empire; the Russians had penetrated deep into Bulgaria; and the Austrians, under Leopold II., had at length reduced the fortresses on the Save and the Drave, when Prussia,

roused by England and supported with money, began to make warlike preparations on the frontiers of Silesia. The convention of Reichenbach was concluded in August, 1791, and in consequence, Austria was obliged, by the peace of Sistowa, to renounce all its conquests. Russia persevered in carrying on the war; for in the autumn of 1790, Potemkin had taken Ismail on the Danube; in May, Repnin, without the aid of Potemkin, completely routed the Turks at Babadagh, and in July their numerous imperial army was so utterly dispersed, that the terms of peace might be dictated to them. From a regard to the then condition of affairs in Poland, and to the representations of those powers which Russia was anxious to instigate to a war with France, Catharine II. contented herself with opening an easy way for herself to Moldavia and Vallachia, by means of the peace concluded at Yassy in January, 1792. Russia did not require any cession of the provinces on the Danube; but, by the peace of Yassy, the sultan was obliged to cede all the country between the Dniestr and the Bug, together with the fortress of Otchakof. From that period the Russians were very much occupied by Polish affairs, and under Paul I. there was even an alliance concluded between Russia and the Porte against the French, who at that time were in occupation of Egypt. When the English joined this alliance, they caused an article to be inserted in the treaty that the territory of the Turks was in no respect to be diminished.

About 1805 the condition of the Ottoman empire, badly organised and worse governed, was such, that everything presaged its approaching dissolution. Everywhere the sultan's authority was disregarded. Paswan Oglu, pasha of Widdin, was in open revolt. Ali Pasha of Janina was obedient only when it suited his convenience. Djezzar, the pasha of Syria, without declaring himself an enemy to the Porte, enjoyed an absolute independence. The sect of the Wahabis was in possession of Arabia. After the departure of the English from Egypt, first the beys, and afterwards Mohammed Ali, reigned over that country, and only paid their yearly tribute to the sultan when they pleased. In Servia, Czerni George was making himself independent prince of the Slavonians of the Danube. Ypsilanti and Morusi, both Greeks, by the permission, or rather by the command, of Russia, were ap-

pointed hospodars of Moldavia and Vallachia, for seven years at least, and were therefore rather subjects of the Russians than of the Turks. Selim III., who had reigned since 1789, convinced that the Porte could never re-establish its authority except by better organising the army, had endeavoured to model it on the European system. This attempt afterwards cost him his throne.

The English and Russian ambassadors ruled either alternately or together in Constantinople. But for their interference the old friendship between France and the Porte would most likely have been restored in July, 1802. At the time of the foundation of the empire in France, the sultan hesitated long whether he would lean upon the English and Russian, or upon the French influence, for he felt a great want of confidence in Napoleon, since he had been informed by the English of the language which fell from the emperor in conversation with lord Whitworth. He was reported to have taken the partition of Turkey for granted—as a thing unavoidable; and that on such partition the province of Egypt ought necessarily to fall to the share of France. This conversation was printed, in 1803, among the documents connected with the renewal of the war between England and France, and was communicated to the sultan. The French, indeed, in their official journals, contradicted the allegation; but who ever put any faith in their official journals? On this ground, we must explain the fact that the Turks favoured the Russians in the war which they were carrying on with the Persians; suffered them to sail up the Phasis, and even to build a fort at its mouth. They were even desirous of renewing the friendly alliance formed with Russia in 1798, which renewal, indeed, the emperor of Russia was afterwards unwilling to confirm, because the English had taken care to have the inviolability of the Turkish empire incorporated in the treaty of 1798. Had, therefore, the emperor of Russia ratified the alliance, he would have guaranteed to the Turks the actual condition of their empire in Europe, which he did not wish to do. This excited the suspicion of the Turks, who inclined more and more towards the French, and did not suffer themselves to be frightened by the threats of the English and Russians. Immediately after the peace of Presburg, the Turks, who had previously



acknowledged Napoleon's empire, sent a new ambassador to Paris. In return, Napoleon sent engineers, officers, artillerymen, workmen, and materials, in order to enable the sultan to improve his army, artillery, and the bulwarks of his empire; whilst, on the other hand, the Russian ambassador, Italinski, and the English ambassador, Arbuthnot, threatened war if the alliance with the French was not relinquished; and Italinski's threats fell with a double weight, because a corps of Russians were ready for action on the Bug.

About the time at which Napoleon adopted the resolution of attacking Prussia also, and therefore foresaw a war with Russia, a Turkish army was assembled to take the field against the Russians on the Turkish frontiers, and Napoleon clearly saw how advantageous to him a war between the Russians and the Turks would be. He therefore sent general Sebastiani as ambassador extraordinary to Constantinople. Sebastiani arrived there in August, 1806; and soon gained so great influence that for some time the divan was entirely under his direction. At his instance, it refused to renew the treaty of alliance with England, which was on the point of expiring; and it dismissed Ypsilanti and Morusi, as creatures of Russia, from their offices. In consequence of the threatening language held by Mr. Arbuthnot, the English ambassador, they were reinstated; but when this took place hostilities had already begun. The emperor Alexander had ordered general Michelson to enter Moldavia and Vallachia. The Porte then declared war against Russia (Dec. 30); but deviating for the first time from a barbarous custom, it allowed M. Italinski, the Russian minister, to depart unmolested.

A few days afterwards, Mr. Arbuthnot quitted Constantinople, after having repeatedly demanded the renewal of the alliance, and the expulsion of M. Sebastiani. On the 19th February, 1807, an English fleet, commanded by vice-admiral Duckworth, forced the passage of the Dardanelles, and appeared before Constantinople. Duckworth demanded of the divan that the forts of the Dardanelles and the Turkish fleet should be surrendered to him; that the Porte should cede Moldavia and Vallachia to Russia, and break off alliance with Napoleon. But instead of profiting by the sudden panic which his appearance had excited, he allowed the Turks

time to put themselves in a posture of defence. Encouraged and instructed by Sebastiani, they made their preparations with such energy and success, that in the course of eight days the English vice-admiral found that he could not do better than weigh anchor and repass the Dardanelles.

Shortly afterwards admiral Siniavin appeared in the Archipelago, and incited the Greek islanders to throw off the Turkish yoke; whilst Duckworth sailed to Egypt upon a fruitless expedition in favour of the Mameluke beys against Mohammed Ali. Siniavin defeated the Turkish fleet on the 4th of April, captured several ships, and took possession of some islands. The bad condition of his ships, however, compelled him to give up the blockade of the Dardanelles, and to retire, in order to refit, after having another time defeated the Turkish fleet. Meanwhile, Selim had been deposed. His successor, Mustapha IV., declared that he would continue to prosecute the war with England and Russia. But Siniavin, before he retired to refit, met the Turkish fleet off Lemnos, on the 1st of July: the Turks were beaten, lost several ships, and a great many men.

The campaign of the Russians on the Danube, in 1807, was not productive of any decisive result, as general Michelson received orders to detach the third army corps to oppose the French in Poland. Czerni George, the leader of the revolted Servians, took Belgrade, Sabacz, and Nissa, penetrated into Bulgaria, where he was reinforced by some Russian troops, and gained divers signal advantages. The war was conducted with more success on the frontiers of the two empires in Asia. The seraskier of Erzeroum was entirely defeated by general Gudovitch (June 18); and that victory was the more important, as it prevented the Persians from making a bold diversion in favour of the Turks.

The emperor Alexander had agreed by the public articles of the treaty of Tilsit (July, 1807) to evacuate Moldavia and Vallachia; but this was only a collusion between the two contracting parties. The Russians not only aimed at the permanent possession of the two provinces, but regarded all the Slavonians of the Danube as allies or subjects of the czar. When the Turks, on the 14th of July, concluded a peace with Czerni George, whereby Servia became in some measure independent—and Czerni George afterwards called

himself prince of Servia—a Russian general guaranteed the treaty by his signature, as one of the parties to the agreement. In the following year Radofinikin, a Russian envoy, repaired to Belgrade to establish the new principality; called an assembly of the nobles; drew up a sketch of a constitution for Servia, and tried to organise the administration.

The French general, Guilleminot, was sent to the Turkish camp to negotiate a truce on the terms ostensibly laid down in the treaty of Tilsit: namely, that the Russians should evacuate Moldavia and Vallachia, but that the Turks should not occupy the two provinces until after the conclusion of a definitive peace. But Guilleminot's instructions contained a *direct* command to use the whole weight of the French influence *in favour* of the Russians and *against* the Turks; even one of Napoleon's greatest admirers, although owning occasional republican scruples, admits that their tone was very equivocal.\* In fact, it very soon became obvious that the whole mission of the general was a mere piece of diplomatic imposture and treachery. A congress was held at Slobozia, in the neighbourhood of Giurgevo, on the 24th of August, 1807, and a truce was signed, which, it was said, was to continue till the 30th of April, 1808. The Russians were to withdraw; the fortresses of Ismail, Braila, and Giurgevo to be given up to the Turks, whose troops, however, were to evacuate Moldavia and Vallachia in thirty-five days. Everything, however, which afterwards took place in consultation between the French and Russians, in reference to Turkey, bore upon a scheme of partition.

The Russians at length, on the 7th of August, had left Cattaro and the other strong places in Dalmatia to the French; their emperor, on the 9th, had ceded all his rights

\* The reader may consult Bignon's diplomatic mystifications in his work. In the text we follow Thibaudeau. See "Hist. de France," &c., vol. vii. ch. lxxiii. pp. 359, &c., where the writer speaks of Michelson, then no longer alive. In vol. iii. p. 220, the author observes that Guilleminot had gone to Constantinople: "De là il retournerait au quartier général russe, pour présider à la conclusion de l'armistice et à tous les arrangements provisoires entre la Porte et la Russie. IL NE PERDRAIT PAS DE VUE QUE L'EMPEREUR VOULAIT EXTREMEMENT MÉNAGER LA RUSSIE TANT DANS LES CHOSES QUE DANS FORMES." The copy of the truce is to be found in Martens, and also in the "Politisches Journal, von 1807," s. 1021-1026.

as protector of the republic of the seven united islands to Napoleon, and the latter was busy making preparations thence to extend his operations and his dominion farther to the east. Marmont, who administered the province of Dalmatia, received orders to fortify Ragusa more strongly, and to make a report on the best plan to be adopted in case it should be desirable to send an army quickly from Corfu, through Albania, Macedonia, and Thrace. The Russians continued to be quiet observers of all this, and in the mean time made firm their footing in the provinces on the Danube. They made a pretence of the conduct of the Turks on the occupation of Galatz, and their ill-treatment of the inhabitants of Moldavia, for not fulfilling the agreement entered into at Slobozia. The Russian troops, who, according to the terms of the treaty, were already retiring, received contrary orders; and the Turks, again driven out of the two provinces, occupied Galatz anew.

The conduct of the negotiation respecting the division of the Turkish booty, was committed to the chief of Napoleon's secret police, who had been actively engaged in the murder of the duc d'Enghien. He now held a princely rank as the duke of Rovigo, and was sent to Petersburg with this and similar commissions. In the Russian capital the emperor Alexander and the duke acted as rivals in the art of dissimulation; the emperor loaded him with civilities of all kinds, as some compensation for the coolness and contempt with which he was at first treated, to a surprising extent, by the empress-mother and the Russian nobility. He was, indeed, soon consoled, for the slaves of the czar were as zealous in showing respect in the presence of their master, as they were gross in their insolence when not under his observation. The accounts which Savary gives us of the political principles of the pious emperor and his chancellor, and their complete agreement with Napoleon's morality and his own, would be quite incredible to us, did he not literally quote their words. Savary's secret report to the emperor Napoleon, partly written in the form of a dialogue, is to be found among the fragments of Napoleon's unprinted correspondence. A contempt for public agreements, and the plunder of Sweden, even before the declaration of war, astonish us less than Romanzof's audacious contempt of the opinion of all Europe;



he thought it not worth a moment's consideration;\* and this was quite in accordance with the language held by his master in speaking on the subject of Turkey.† Thibaudeau has given so correct an opinion of both the emperors—of the nature of their consultations—of Savary and Romanzof, that we cannot do better than refer the reader to the words of that writer.‡

Turkey would at that time undoubtedly have been partitioned, had Austria been willing to follow the numerous gentle hints to join the alliance of the emperors, who imagined themselves able to make their will the right and law of all nations; or if Napoleon had not found it inconsistent with his plans to bring on at an unfavourable moment

\* “L'Europe ne dira rien. Qu'est l'Europe? Qu'est elle, si ce n'est entre vous et nous?”

† For Savary's report to the emperor, see “Correspondence inédite de Napoléon Bonaparte,” &c., vol. vii. pp. 364-384. In page 375 it proceeds as follows: “A la lecture de cette dernière réplique de ma part, l'empereur Alexandre se prit à rire et me dit: Ma foi, tout ce que l'empereur voudra. Je compte uniquement sur lui. Je vous dirai même, que, dans nos conversations de Tilsit, il m'a souvent dit, qu'il ne tenait pas à l'évacuation de la Moldavie et de la Wallachie, qu'on la traînerait en longueur pour se dispenser, et qu'il n'était pas possible de souffrir plus longtemps les Turcs en Europe, il me laissait même entrevoir le projet de les jeter en Asie; ce n'est qu'ensuite qu'il est revenu à leur laisser Constantinople et quelques provinces environnantes.”

‡ Thibaudeau, “Empire,” vol. iii. p. 222. “Cette affaire fut traitée verbalement dans des entretiens de Savary avec Alexandre, et ensuite avec le ministre Romanzow. *Mettant de côté toute finesse diplomatique, on s'explique franchement comme deux chefs de bande sur un partage de butin.* Alexandre disait qu'à Tilsit Napoléon lui ayant promis les principautés, il réclamait l'effet de cette promesse, parce qu'il valait mieux les garder pendant qu'on y était, que de les évacuer pour y revenir. Il s'était déjà assez dépopularisé aux yeux de sa nation en déclarant la guerre à l'Angleterre et à la Suède; il fallait du moins qu'il pût lui présenter les principautés comme compensation. Il s'agissait, non de chicaner, mais de s'obliger à l'envi l'un l'autre. On pouvait aider beaucoup Napoléon, on le voulait, il serait content, toujours content. S'inquiéterait-on de l'Europe? Elle ne dirait rien. Qu'était l'Europe? Où était elle? si ce n'était entre la Russie et la France? La logique de Savary était faible contre ces arguments; il ne dit ni oui ni non. Toute l'année se passa à disputer sur le lieu où se tiendraient les négociations; la Russie les voulait en Moldavie, Napoléon à Paris.” Compare with this Bignon's miserable trash in vol. vii. ch. lxxiv. of his work.

a new war with Austria, which he clearly foresaw in 1808. The Russians, in the mean time, remained, throughout the whole of the year 1808, in quiet possession of the provinces which had been previously evacuated by them, and ruled not only in them, but extended their dominion as far as Belgrade, for the new prince of Servia was likewise under Russian protection. The army under the command of the grand vizier, which lay at Adrianople during the winter of 1807-1808, dwindled, during the continuance of the truce of Slobozia, to a few thousand men, because, according to ancient custom, the Janissaries returned to their homes in winter; it again increased, however, in the beginning of summer. Bairactar's army, which was organised on the new European principle, was computed at from twenty to thirty thousand men; it remained on the Danube till its leader, at length, resolved to put an end to the anarchy prevailing in Constantinople. He deposed Mustapha IV., who supported the faction of the Janissaries, and placed his brother, Mahmoud, on the throne. Bairactar perished, however, in an insurrection (Nov. 14), and Mahmoud, too, would have been murdered, had he not been the last scion of the imperial family. But he was compelled entirely to change his ministry, and to resign the government into the hands of those who enjoyed the favour of the ulemas and the Janissaries.

During the disturbances in the internal affairs of the Turkish empire, the foreign relations continued the same as they were in the year 1807, immediately after the truce of Slobozia. When Napoleon's plan of removing the negotiations respecting a peace between the Russians and the Turks to Paris failed of success, he found it advisable, in consequence of an impending war with Austria, to give the Turks into the hands of the Russians. One of the chief causes of the war between France and Austria in 1809 was the close union between the latter power and England in reference to Turkish affairs, which appeared in the co-operation of lord Paget and baron von Stürmer, the English and Austrian ambassadors in Constantinople. It was the Austrians who mediated the peace between England and the Porte of the 5th of January, 1809, after the conclusion of

which the Turks refused to cede Moldavia and Vallachia to the Russians, at the congress of Yassy, as they had formerly done at Bucharest. This led to a new war, of which we shall have to speak hereafter.

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## CHAPTER LIX.

CONGRESS OF ERFURT—INCIPIENT ENMITY BETWEEN NAPOLEON AND ALEXANDER—CAMPAIGN OF WAGRAM—WAR WITH TURKEY, 1809-11—TREATY OF BUCHAREST.

IN consequence of the complete stoppage of trade which followed the declaration of war in 1807, Russia suffered much more severely than England,\* and the Russian magnates, supported by the aversion of the emperor's mother to Napoleon, were very far from showing that good-will to the French which their emperor manifested for Napoleon and his representatives. This was soon experienced by Savary, duke of Rovigo, who, though overloaded with marks of politeness by the emperor, in reality proved unable to make any way at the court of St. Petersburg. Caulaincourt, duke of Vicenza, was afterwards deceived for some years by appearances, and by Alexander's masterly art of dissimulation; but Napoleon soon came to experience in Spain that the personal proofs of friendship exhibited by the emperor were by no means always in accordance with the Russian policy. The emperor Alexander himself, for example, on the urgent request of Caulaincourt, acknowledged Joseph Bonaparte as king of Spain; whilst Stroganof, the Russian ambassador in Madrid, alleged that he had no instructions to that effect, and corresponded with the insurgents. In the same way, admiral Siniavin, who, on the breaking out of war with England, had taken refuge in Lisbon with nine ships of the line and a frigate, not only refused to render any assistance to marshal Junot, who was threatened in that city by the English, but even to make a demonstration as if he were prepared to assist him. The manner in which he afterwards capitulated, on the 3rd of

\* Russian exports this year amounted to about 2,615,147 rubles; and its imports to about 13,672,793 rubles.

September, 1808, to admiral Cotton, who caused his ships to be taken to England, might indicate a very different disposition, especially as the ten ships were afterwards given back.

There was, indeed, no want of interchange of civilities between the two emperors. Whoever compares the attentions and marks of regard which have been recorded as shown by the one to the other, with the secret intrigues which they were at the same moment weaving against each other in Turkey and Spain, and with the open enmity which was shown as early as 1811, will learn from such a comparison what is the real worth of diplomatic and princely friendships. The emperor of Russia made presents to his imperial brother of vessels and ornaments of malachite and other precious stones, which the latter exhibited in the Salon du Paix in the Tuileries, in order to be able to boast of the friendship of the emperor of Russia in presence of the circles of the faubourg St. Germain. Busts of Alexander were manufactured in the imperial porcelain manufactory at Sèvres, and were everywhere to be seen in the palace and rooms of the imperial family. All who had access to the court, or wished to make themselves agreeable to the emperor, found it necessary to purchase these ornaments, and place them conspicuously in their houses. The friendship was so intimate, that one of the emperor of Russia's adjutants accompanied the emperor of the French when he went to Bayonne to set aside the whole reigning family of Spain. This adjutant, however, was the same Tchernitchef who was engaged in constantly travelling backwards and forwards between Petersburg and Paris, who surrounded Napoleon, in spite of all his police, with a net of Russian espionage, and bribed all the employés who were venal in order to obtain papers. He intrigued with ladies to elicit secrets from them; and finally, in 1812, he even purchased a copy of the plan of operations for the war, when it was too late to change it.

Napoleon knew that Austria was thinking of taking advantage of the general discontent and the secret associations in Germany to frustrate the plans of France and Russia with respect to Poland and Turkey; he was, therefore, very desirous of assuring himself once more of the Russian emperor before his journey to Spain. This design was a cause of



great anxiety to the very numerous partisans of the English and Prussian policy at the Russian court, when the question was raised of a conference between the two emperors in Erfurt. Von Sladen, the friend of the minister Von Stein, therefore presented a memorial to the emperor of Russia, shortly before his departure to Erfurt on the 7th of September, 1808, in which Alexander was forewarned of all that would take place there. From this it may be seen that the emperor of Russia was continually receiving secret counsel and warning from the enemies of the French, and that he played his part in Erfurt more ably than Napoleon, from whom he separated, as even the French writers report, with all the outward signs of indescribable friendship and esteem, but inwardly full of distrust. Von Sladen says very freely to the emperor, that he had given him the advice laid down in his memorial, "in order that he might see through the sophisms, falsehoods, and deceptions which were prepared for him by Napoleon, and awaited him in Erfurt."

On his way to the congress, the emperor visited the king and queen of Prussia in Königsberg, and arrived on the 26th of September in Weimar, where his brother Constantine had been staying since the 24th. On the 27th Napoleon entered Erfurt, and at one o'clock drove out a distance of several miles from the town to meet the emperor of Russia, who was coming from Weimar. Our modest object does not permit us to incorporate in our prose the poetry of the subsequent festivities, nor in glowing language to extol the skill displayed by the masters of the ceremonies. That splendour enough was exhibited in Erfurt may be sufficiently gathered from the fact, that the four vassal-kings of the Confederation of the Rhine, thirty-four princes, twenty-four ministers of state, and thirty generals, were by express command to summon up for the occasion everything which imagination could suggest in the way of courtly splendour and extravagance. Talma and the Parisian company of actors had been sent to Erfurt, to act, as Napoleon said, before a pit of kings. Two arm-chairs were placed for the two emperors, whilst the other rulers sat behind them on common chairs. We know not what truth there was in the story, which was at that time in every mouth, and related in all the French works written for effect, that the emperor Alexander, whilst Talma

was being applauded on the stage, played his own part with Napoleon in the pit in quite as masterly a manner. The latter, amidst immense applause, pronounced the following line :

“ *L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des dieux ;*”

when the emperor seized Napoleon's hand, made a profound bow, and feelingly exclaimed : “ *THAT I HAVE NEVER MORE TRULY FELT THAN AT THE PRESENT MOMENT.*” The festivities continued from the 27th of September till the 14th of October, and furnished to the Germans the most melancholy spectacle of their princes and nobles conducting themselves publicly, not only as slaves of Napoleon, but even as servants and flatterers of all his generals and courtiers.

In order to flatter the emperor of Russia, Napoleon acted as if he had been influenced by Alexander's application in favour of Prussia ; but in reality, oppressed the king and his subjects afterwards just as before. He profited by Alexander's admiration and friendship to make a show of his pretended willingness to conclude a peace with England. Though he had written three times directly to the king of England, and had always been referred to the minister, he nevertheless prevailed upon Alexander to unite with him in signing another letter addressed to king George. The result was such as might have been foreseen ; the object, however, was attained ; the letters and answers were printed, and officially commented upon in the journals.

The negotiations were carried on personally in Erfurt between the two emperors themselves, and much was agreed upon which neither the one nor the other intended to observe. A written treaty of alliance was besides concluded by Romanzof and Champagny, which was calculated with a view to a new war with Austria. The substance of the agreement consists in a closer alliance of the two powers against England, and the cession of Moldavia and Vallachia to Russia. Hitherto Napoleon had only been willing to concede this last point on conditions which referred to Silesia. In the fifth article of the treaty of Erfurt, which was kept strictly secret, the two emperors agreed to conclude a peace with England on condition only that that country should acknowledge Moldavia and Vallachia as a part of the Russian empire. Then

follow several articles on the cession of those Turkish provinces. In the eleventh article it is stated, that FURTHER negotiations were to be carried on respecting a FURTHER partition. It was agreed, too, that the treaty was to be kept secret for ten years. Buturlin boasts, with reason, that the emperor Alexander in Erfurt, by his Greco-Sclavonian arts of deception, gained a victory over the Italo-Gallic talents of Napoleon; and, in fact, the very highest triumph is to outwit the deceiver.

Even as early as this Napoleon is said to have thrown out the idea of a marriage with Catherine Paulovna, Alexander's sister, which inferred, of course, a previous separation from the empress Josephine. Alexander, on his part, is said to have raised difficulties on the question of religion, and to have referred the matter to his mother, who very speedily had the princess betrothed to duke Peter of Oldenburg. Moreover, the reception of the duke of Oldenburg into the Confederation of the Rhine was one of the results of the meeting in Erfurt.

The war which broke out in April, 1809, between France and Austria put the sincerity of the Russo-French alliance to a practical test. Russia complied with the letter of her engagements to the one belligerent power by declaring war against the other; but prince Galitzin, who was to have made a powerful diversion in Galicia, came so late into the field, and his movements were so dilatory, that it was evident he had no desire to contribute to the success of his sovereign's ally. There was no longer any show of cordiality in the diplomatic intercourse between France and Russia; but both parties found it convenient for the present to dissemble their mutual alienation. By the treaty of Schönbrunn, signed by vanquished Austria (Oct. 14, 1809), that power ceded, partly to France and partly to the Confederation of the Rhine, several towns in Germany and Italy, with their dependencies; she was despoiled, in favour of the duchy of Warsaw, of all Western Galicia and the city of Cracow; and surrendered to Russia a territory whose population was estimated at 400,000 souls. The emperor of Austria, moreover, recognised the rights which Napoleon arrogated over the monarchies of the south of Europe, adhered to his conti-

mental system, and renounced all the countries comprised under the name of the Illyrian Provinces. But the house of Hapsburg, true to the adage, *Tu, felix Austria, nube*, retrieved its fortunes at the expense of its pride, by bestowing a daughter in marriage on the conqueror.

Immediately after Alexander's return from Erfurt orders were given to open negotiations with the Turks. The conference took place at Yassy; but it was immediately broken off after the Russian plenipotentiaries had demanded, as preliminary conditions, the cession of Moldavia and Wallachia, and the expulsion of the British minister from Constantinople. Hostilities were then resumed. The Russians were commanded by prince Prosorofski, and after his death by prince Bagration. With the exception of Giurgevo, all the fortresses attacked by them fell into their hands, until they encountered the army of the grand vizier, near Silistria, and being defeated with a loss of 10,000 men (Sept. 26), were compelled to evacuate Bulgaria. The grand vizier, without taking advantage of his victory, retired to winter quarters.

In May, 1810, the Russian main army, under Kamenskoi, again crossed the Danube at Hirsova, passed through the Dobrudsha, and marched straight against the Turkish main army to Shumla and Varna. At the same time, the corps of generals Langeron and Sacken proceeded to blockade Silistria and Rustchuk. The Turks could nowhere keep the field. At Kavarna they were routed; at the storming of Bazardjik they lost 10,000 men; at the storming of Rasgrad 3000. Silistria was reduced in seven days by Langeron. So far everything was favourable for the Russians. If they had added to their advantages the conquest of Rustchuk, the passes of Tirnova and of Sophia towards Adrianople would have been open, the fortress of Shumla would have been avoided, and the main army of the enemy would have been manœuvred out of it. The taking of Rustchuk, and above all the sparing of the troops, was consequently the next problem for general Kamenskoi. Instead of doing this, the Russians attempted to storm almost simultaneously the fortifications of Varna, Shumla, and Rustchuk, were repulsed from these three places, the defence of which was conducted



by English officers, and suffered so enormously, that the Turks felt themselves strong enough to come out from behind their entrenchments, and attack the Russian camp before Shumla. They failed, however, in their attempt to storm it.

To relieve Rustchuk, the grand vizier sent Muctar Pasha with picked troops, by way of Tirnova, to the Danube. But if the Turks with their united forces were too weak to force the Russians to abandon the entrenchments before Shumla, they could certainly not expect with a part of their army to rout the enemy near Rustchuk, where he stood with his united forces between their separate wings. Only in case Muctar Pasha, who had increased his forces to 40,000 men, entered Vallachia at Turna, and marched against Giurgevo, could the offensive have a meaning, or any influence, upon the siege of Rustchuk, because here it met with the weak point of the enemy. But to enter upon the offensive with an army in Vallachia, whilst the Russians stood before the fortresses of the Danube in Bulgaria, never came into the heads of the Turks. Muctar Pasha entrenched himself at the mouth of the Yantra to cover the passes of Tirnova and Sophia. On the 7th of September he was attacked in front, flank, and rear, held out with his best troops till the next morning, and then surrendered with 5000 men, and all his artillery. After this Sistovo and Cladova capitulated, and on the 27th September Rustchuk and Giurgevo surrendered.

The road to Adrianople was now open for the Russians, but their enormous losses, caused by their own folly, would have prevented their assuming the offensive beyond the Balkan for this year, even if the season had not been so far advanced. Reinforcements for the next year could not be expected, as Napoleon was preparing to attack Russia, and therefore they began to negotiate. Another insurrection of the Janissaries interrupted these negotiations, but did not induce the grand vizier to profit by this opportunity, and fall with his whole force upon the Russians, who, at this time, were scattered over the country from Widdin to Sophia and thence as far as Varna. Not until Czerny George, in February, 1811, had placed the principality of Servia under the protection of Russia, did the grand vizier awake from his apathy in Thrace, and cross the Balkan, with only 15,000 men. He, however, proceeded so slowly, that Kamenskoi

had time enough to assemble sufficient forces. They met at Lofteh on the Osma; the Turks were defeated, and lost 3000 men. Achmet Pasha, however, a violent and sturdy soldier, without any higher military education, led 50,000 fresh troops to Shumla, and insisted upon their taking the offensive. The Russians had received no reinforcements, but Kutusof had taken the command. Without any considerable losses, he concentrated his small army at Silistria and Rustchuk, and abandoned Bulgaria as far as the latter place, after having razed the fortresses. In the battle before Rustchuk, on the 4th of July, the Turks were driven back, but on the 7th, they forced the 20,000 Russians who stood on the right bank of the Danube to give up Rustchuk also, though not until its works had been razed.

Instead of crossing the river from the Dobrudsha, and operating with a superior force upon the Russian lines of communication, the grand vizier allowed himself to be induced, by the retreat of Kutusof, to cross the Danube at Rustchuk, without a fortress in his rear. Arrived on the left bank with his main army, a Russian flotilla barred his retreat, while Russian corps recrossed the Danube above and below Rustchuk, and took possession of the town (no longer fortified) and of the Turkish camp (Sept. 7). The grand vizier fled, but his main army still consisting of 25,000 men and 56 pieces of artillery, were forced to surrender in the vicinity of Giurgevo. A few days afterwards, count St. Priest took Shirtof, with the whole of the Turkish flotilla on the Danube. Nicopoli and Widdin next surrendered, so that by the end of the campaign the Russians were masters of the whole right bank of the Danube. The Servians, also, aided by a body of Russians, had wrested from the Turks the last fortresses they held in the principality.

The grand vizier asked for a suspension of arms, with a view to negotiating a peace; but the terms now demanded by the victorious Russians were such as the Porte would not accede to. The war was continued in 1811, but always to the disadvantage of the Turks. Resolved on a last desperate effort, they assembled a formidable army whilst the conference at Bucharest was still pending. At last, the rupture between France and Russia changed the aspect of affairs, and compelled the latter power to abandon the long-coveted

prey when it was already in its grasp. The Russian minister, Italinski, contented himself with requiring that the Pruth should for the future form the boundary between the two empires. The sultan regarded even this concession as disgraceful; but the Russians carried their point by bribery, and the treaty of Bucharest was concluded. Its chief provisions were these:

Art. 4. The Pruth, from the point where it enters Moldavia to its confluence with the Danube, and thence the left bank of the latter to its embouchure on the Black Sea at Kilia, shall be the boundary between the two empires.

Thus the Porte surrendered to Russia a third of Moldavia, with the fortresses of Khoczim and Bender, and all Bessarabia, with Ismail and Kilia.

By the same article, the navigation of the Danube is common to the subjects of Russia and Turkey. The islands inclosed between the several arms of the river below Ismail are to remain waste. The rest of Moldavia and Vallachia are to be restored to the Turks in their actual condition.

Art. 6. The Asiatic frontier remains the same as it was before the war.

Art. 8 relates to the Servians, to whom the Porte grants an amnesty and some privileges, the interpretation of which offers a wide field for the exercise of diplomatic subtlety.

Art. 13. Russia accepts the mediation of the Porte for the conclusion of a peace with Persia, where hostilities had begun anew, at the instigation of the English ambassador.

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## CHAPTER LX.

### RELATIONS WITH FRANCE TILL JANUARY, 1812—NAPOLEON'S RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the demonstrations to the contrary made since the peace of Tilsit, England, Russia, Prussia, and also Austria partially, always continued to maintain a certain mutual understanding, which was, however, kept very secret, and somewhat resembled a conspiracy. The most distinguished statesmen both in Russia and Prussia felt how unna-

tural was an alliance between Napoleon, Alexander, and Frederick William III., and directed attention to the subject. This was also done on the part of England, and it is certain that the emperor Alexander, as early as the meeting in Erfurt in 1808, expressed his doubts respecting the duration of his alliance with France. The conduct of Russia in the campaign against Austria, in 1809, first shook Napoleon's confidence in his ally. Mutual complaints and recriminations ensued; but neither party thought it advisable to give any prominence to their disunion, and Napoleon, even when he had entered, through Thugut, upon the subject of an Austrian marriage, still continued to carry on negotiations for an alliance with a Russian princess.

The enlargement of the territory of the duchy of Warsaw, extorted by Napoleon at the peace of Schönbrunn, at length led to an exchange of diplomatic notes, which tended strongly to a war. The Poles naturally expected from Napoleon and his advisers that he would in some way give new life and currency to the name of Poland; against this the emperor of Russia earnestly protested. The whole of the diplomatic correspondence between Russia and France in the years 1810 and 1811 turns upon the use of the words *Poles* and *Polish*, although Russia had again obtained by the peace of Schönbrunn a portion of Austrian Poland, as it had previously obtained a part of Prussian Poland by the peace of Tilsit. Seeing that the whole of Western Galicia, Zamoisk, and Cracow had been united to the duchy of Warsaw by the peace of Schönbrunn, Russia called upon the emperor of the French to bind himself expressly by treaty not to revive the names of Pole and kingdom of Poland. Before the end of 1809 many notes were exchanged concerning this point, apparently so insignificant, but in reality so important for the peace and safety of the Russian empire. Napoleon agreed to give the assurance so earnestly desired by Alexander, and Caulaincourt, the French ambassador in Petersburg, signed a regular concession of the Russian demand in January, 1810. By the first two articles of this agreement it was laid down that the words *Poland*, or *Polish*, was not to be used when any reference was made to the enlargement of the duchy of Warsaw. By the third article the two emperors bound themselves not to revive or renew any of the



old Polish orders. In the fifth, the emperor of the French agreed not further to enlarge the duchy of Warsaw by the addition of provinces or cities belonging to the former state of Poland.

This agreement, signed by Caulaincourt, still required the confirmation of the emperor of the French: and Napoleon had given instructions to his ambassador only to agree to such an arrangement on condition that the agreement was drawn up in the usual diplomatic manner: that is to say, in employing words and phrases so chosen as to be capable of any subsequent interpretation which may best suit the parties. This was not done. The articles were very brief, the language so clear and definite as to be incapable of mistake or misrepresentation. Without directly refusing his sanction to the treaty, Napoleon required that it should be couched in different language, and caused a new draft of it to be presented in St. Petersburg. The Russians saw at once through his purpose, and Alexander expressed his displeasure in terms which plainly indicated to the French ambassador his belief that Napoleon was really meditating some hostile measures against him, and was only seeking to gain time by the treaty.

This occurred in February, 1810; in the following months both Romanzof and Caulaincourt took the greatest possible pains to bring the question to a favourable issue, and negotiations continued to be carried on respecting this subject till September. They could not agree; and after September there was no more talk of the treaty, much less of its alteration. The relation between the two emperors had undergone a complete change in the course of the year.

The cupidity of Russia, far from being glutted by the possession of Finland, great part of Prussian and Austrian Poland, Moldavia, and Bessarabia, still craved for more. Napoleon was, however, little inclined to concede Constantinople and the Mediterranean to his Russian ally (to whose empire he assigned the Danube as a boundary), or to put it in possession of the duchy of Warsaw. The Austrian marriage, which was effected in 1809, naturally led Russia to conclude that she would no longer be permitted to aggrandise herself at the expense of Austria, and Alexander, seeing that nothing more was to be gained by complaisance to France, conse-

quently assumed a threatening posture, and condescended to listen to the complaints of his agricultural and mercantile subjects. No Russian vessel durst venture out to sea, and a Russian fleet had been seized by the British in the harbours of Lisbon. At Riga lay immense stores of grain in want of a foreign market. On the 31st of December, 1810, Alexander published a fresh tariff permitting the importation of colonial products under a neutral flag (several hundred English ships arrived under the American flag), and prohibiting the importation of French manufactured goods. Not many weeks previously, on the 13th of December, Napoleon had annexed Oldenberg to France. The duke, Peter, was nearly related to the emperor of Russia, and Napoleon, notwithstanding his declared readiness to grant a compensation, refused to allow it to consist of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, and proposed a duchy of Erfurt, as yet uncreated, which Russia scornfully rejected.

The alliance between Russia, Sweden, and England was now speedily concluded. Sweden, which had vainly demanded from Napoleon the possession of Norway and a large supply of money, assumed a tone of indignation, threw open her harbours to the British merchantmen, and so openly carried on a contraband trade in Pomerania, that Napoleon, in order to maintain the continental system, was constrained to garrison Swedish Pomerania and Rügen and to disarm the Swedish inhabitants. Bernadotte, upon this, ranged himself entirely on the side of his opponents, without, however, coming to an open rupture, for which he awaited a declaration on the part of Russia. The expressions made use of by Napoleon on the birth of the king of Rome at length filled up the measure of provocation. Intoxicated with success, he boasted, in an address to the mercantile classes, that he would, in despite of Russia, maintain the continental system, for he was lord over the whole of continental Europe; and that if Alexander had not concluded a treaty with him at Tilsit, he would have compelled him to do so at Petersburg.—The pride of the haughty Russian was deeply wounded, and a rupture was nigh at hand.

Russia had, meanwhile, anticipated Napoleon in making preparations for war. As early as 1811, a great Russian army stood ready for the invasion of Poland, and might, as

there were at that time but few French troops in Germany, easily have advanced as far as the Elbe. It remained, however, in a state of inactivity.\* Napoleon instantly prepared for war and fortified Dantzic. His continual proposals of peace, ever unsatisfactory to the ambition of the czar, remaining at length unanswered, he declared war. The Rhenish confederation followed as usual in his train, and so did Austria from an interested motive, the hope of regaining in the East by Napoleon's assistance all she had lost by opposing him in the West, or that of resuming her station as the third European power when the resources of the two ruling powers, whose coalition had threatened her existence, had been exhausted by war. Prussia also followed the eagles of Napoleon.

In the spring of 1812, Napoleon, after leaving a sufficient force to prosecute the war with activity in Spain, and to guard France, Italy, and Germany, led half a million men to the Russian frontiers. His army was principally composed of German troops, who were so skilfully mixed up with the French as not to be themselves aware of their numerical superiority. Upwards of two hundred thousand Germans, at the lowest computation, marched against Russia, a number far superior to that of the French in the army, the remainder of which was made up by several thousand Italians, Portuguese, and Spaniards, who had been pressed into the service.†

A rich compensation was, by a secret compact, secured to Austria in case the cession of Galicia should be necessitated by the expected restoration of the kingdom of Poland, with which Napoleon had long flattered the Poles, who, misled by his promises, served him with the greatest enthusiasm. But, notwithstanding the removal of the only obstacle, the jealousy of Austria in regard to Galicia, by this secret compact, his promises remained unfulfilled, and he took possession of the whole of Poland without restoring her ancient independence. The petitions addressed to him on this subject by the Poles

\* From a letter of count Münster, in Hormayr's "Sketches of Life," it appears that Russia still cherished the hope of great concessions being made by Napoleon in order to avoid war, and was therefore still reserved in her relations with England and the Prussian patriots.

† Napoleon said at that time to a Russian, "Si vous perdez cinq Russes, je ne perds qu'un Français et quatre cochons."

received dubious replies, and he pursued towards his unfortunate dupes his ancient system of dismembering and intermingling nations, and tolerating no national unity. Napoleon's principal motive, however, was his expectation of compelling the emperor by a well-aimed blow to conclude peace, and of forming with him an alliance upon still more favourable terms against the rest of the European powers. The friendship of Russia was of far more importance to him than all the enthusiasm of the Poles.

The deep conviction harboured by Napoleon, of his irresistible power, led him to repay every service and regard every antagonist with contempt. Confident of victory, he deviated from the strict military discipline he had at one time enforced, and of which he had given an example in his own person; he dragged in his train a multitude of useless attendants fitted but for pomp and luxury, permitted his marshals and generals to do the same, and an incredible number of private carriages, servants, women, &c., to follow in the rear of the army, to hamper its movements, create confusion, and aid in consuming the army stores, which being, moreover, merely provided for a short campaign, speedily became insufficient for the maintenance of the enormous mass. Even in Eastern Prussia, numbers of the soldiery were constrained by want to plunder the villages.

On the 24th of June, 1812, Napoleon crossed the Niemen, the Russian frontier, not far from Kowno. The season was already too far advanced. It may be that, deceived by the mildness of the winter of 1806 to 1807, he imagined it possible to protract the campaign without peril to himself until the winter months. No enemy appeared to oppose his progress. Barclay de Tolly, the Russian commander-in-chief, pursued the system followed by the Scythians against Darius, and perpetually retiring before the enemy, gradually drew him deep into the dreary and deserted steppes. This plan originated with Scharnhorst, by whom general Lieven was advised not to hazard an engagement until the winter, and to turn a deaf ear to every proposal of peace. General Lieven, on reaching Barclay's head-quarters, took into his confidence colonel Toll, a German, Barclay's right hand, and lieutenant-colonel Clausewitz, also a German, afterwards noted for his strategical works. General Pfuel, another



German, at that time high in the emperor's confidence, and almost all the Russian generals, opposed Scharnhorst's plan, and continued to advance with a view of giving battle : but on Napoleon's appearance at the head of an army greatly their superior in number before the Russians had been able to concentrate their forces, they were naturally compelled to retire before him ; and, on the prevention, for some weeks, of the junction of a newly-levied Russian army under prince Bagration with the forces under Barclay, owing to the rapidity of Napoleon's advance, Scharnhorst's plan was adopted as the only one feasible.

Whilst the French were advancing, a warm and tedious discussion was carried on so long in the imperial Russian council of war at Wilna, whether to defend that city, or adopt the plan of Barclay de Tolly, the minister of war and commander-in-chief, that they were at length obliged to march precipitately to the Dwina with the sacrifice of considerable stores, and to take possession of a fortified camp which had been established at Drissa. As late as the 27th the emperor Alexander and the whole of his splendid staff and court were assembled at a ball, at the castle of Zacrest, near Wilna, belonging to general Benningsen, so that the French found everything on the 28th just as it had been prepared for the reception of the emperor of Russia. They plundered the castle, and carried off the furniture as booty ; the Russians were even obliged to leave behind them considerable quantities of ammunition and provisions. In this way the line of the Russian defences was broken through ; and even a portion of their army under Platof and Bagration would have been cut off, had the king of Westphalia obeyed the commands of his brother with the necessary rapidity. The difficulties of carrying on war in such an inhospitable country as Lithuania and Russia became apparent even at Wilna ; the carriages and waggons fell behind, the cannon were obliged to be left, discipline became relaxed, above 10,000 horses had already fallen, and their carcases poisoned the air. General Balakof could scarcely be considered serious in the proposals which he then made for peace in the name of the emperor of Russia, because the Russians required as a preliminary to all negotiation that the French army should first retire behind the

Niemen. The mission of a general, who had been minister of police, and had therefore had great experience in obtaining information, had no doubt a very different object in view from that of making peace at such a moment.

Napoleon, in the hope of overtaking the Russians, and of compelling them to give battle, pushed onwards by forced marches; the supplies were unable to follow, and numbers of the men and horses sank from exhaustion, owing to over-fatigue, heat, and hunger.\* On the arrival of Napoleon in Witepsk, of Schwartzenberg in Volhynia, of the Prussians before Riga, the army might have halted, reconquered Poland, have been organised, the men put into winter-quarters, the army have again taken the field early in the spring, and the conquest of Russia have been slowly but surely completed. But Napoleon had resolved upon terminating the war in one rapid campaign, upon defeating the Russians, seizing their metropolis, and dictating terms of peace. He incessantly pursued his retreating opponent, whose footsteps were marked by the flames of the cities and villages and by the devastated country to their rear. The first serious opposition was made at Smolensk, whence the Russians, however, speedily retreated after setting the city on fire. On the same day, the Bavarians, who had diverged to one side during their advance, had a furious encounter at Poloczka with a body of Russian troops under Wittgenstein. The Bavarians remained stationary in this part of the country for the purpose of watching the movements of that general, whilst Napoleon, careless of the peril with which he was threatened by the approach of winter and by the multitude of enemies gathering to his rear, advanced with the main body of the grand army from Smolensk across the wasted country upon Moscow, the ancient metropolis of the Russian empire.

Russia, at that time engaged in a war with Turkey, whose frontiers were watched by an immense army under Kutusof, used her utmost efforts, in which she was aided by England, to conciliate the Porte in order to turn the whole of her forces against Napoleon. By a master-stroke of political in-

\* At each encampment the men were left in such numbers in hastily erected hospitals, that of 38,000 Bavarians, for instance, but 10,000, of 16,000 Wurtembergers, but 1300 reached Smolensk.

trigue,\* the Porte was made to conclude a disadvantageous peace at Bucharest on the 28th of May, as we have already related. A Russian army under Tchitchakof was now enabled to drive the Austrians out of Volhynia, whilst a considerable force under Kutusof joined Barclay. Buturlin, the Russian historian of the war, states that the national troops opposed to the invaders numbered 217,000 in the first line, and 35,000 in the second. Chambray, whose details are very minute, after deducting the men in hospital, gives the number of those present under arms as 235,000 of the regular army, without reckoning the garrisons of Riga, &c. This computation exceeds that of Buturlin, under the same circumstances, by 17,000. M. de Fezensac allows 230,000 for the total of the two armies of Barclay de Tolly and Bagration, but adds the army of Tormassof on their extreme left, 68,000, and that defending Courland, on their extreme right, 34,000, to make up the Russian total of 330,000 men.

Had the Russians at this time hazarded an engagement, their defeat was certain. Moscow could not have been saved. Barclay consequently resolved not to come to an engagement, but to husband his forces and to attack the French during the winter. The intended surrender of Moscow without a blow was, nevertheless, deeply resented as a national disgrace; the army and the people† raised a clamour. Kutusof, though immeasurably inferior to Barclay, was nominated commander-in-chief, took up a position on the little river Moskwa near Borodino, about two days' journey from Moscow. A bloody engagement took place there on the 7th

\* The Greek prince, Moruzi, who at that time conducted Turkish diplomacy, accepted a bribe, and concluded peace in the expectation of becoming prince of Moldavia and Wallachia. Sultan Mahmoud refusing to ratify this disgraceful treaty, gold was showered upon the Turkish army, which suddenly dispersed, and the deserted sultan was compelled to yield. Moruzi was deprived of his head, but the Russians had gained their object. It must, moreover, be considered that Napoleon was regarded with distrust by the Porte, against whom he had fought in Egypt, whom he had afterwards enticed into a war with Russia, and had abandoned by the alliance formed at Tilsit with that power.

† Colonel Toll was insulted during the discussion by prince Bagration for the firmness with which he upheld Scharnhorst's plan, and avoided hazarding a useless engagement. Prince Bagration was killed in the battle.

of September, in which Napoleon, in order to spare his guards, neglected to follow up his advantage with his usual energy, and allowed the defeated Russians, whom he might have totally annihilated, to escape. Napoleon triumphed; but at what a price! After a fearful struggle, in which he lost forty thousand men in killed and wounded! the latter of whom perished, almost to a man, owing to want and neglect.\*

Moscow was now both defenceless and void of inhabitants. Napoleon traversed this enormous city, containing two hundred and ninety-five churches and fifteen hundred palaces rising from amid a sea of inferior dwellings, and took possession of the residence of the czars, the 14th of September, 1812. The whole city was, however, deserted, and scarcely had the French army taken up its quarters in it ere flames burst from the empty and closely shut-up houses, and soon the whole of the immense city became a sea of fire, and was reduced, before Napoleon's eyes, to ashes. Every attempt to extinguish the flames proved unavailing. Rostopshin, the commandant of Moscow, had, previously to his retreat, put combustible materials into the houses,† which were ignited on the entrance of the French by men secreted for that purpose. A violent wind aided the work of destruction. The patriotic sacrifice was performed, and failed not in its object. Napoleon, instead of peace and plenty, merely found ashes in Moscow.

After the battle of Borodino, Kutusof had retreated towards Moscow, and halted near its suburbs. The position appearing altogether an unfavourable one in which to await the enemy, the retreat was continued through the city. On the night of the 13th of September its inhabitants were still sleeping in a half-consciousness of security—still lulled and willing to be deceived by Rostopshin's boastful proclamations. It may be conceived what would be the effect of awakening 300,000 people out of their sleep to pack and save their

\* Everything was wanting; lint, linen, even necessary food. The wounded men lay for days and weeks under the open sky and fed upon the carcasses of horses.

† This combustible matter had been prepared by Schmid, the Dutchman, under pretext of preparing an enormous balloon from which fire was to be scattered upon the French army.



goods from the grasp of the foe—to leave their native city and their home within a few hours for another, they knew not where, in the wide waste of the Russian empire. Such was the scene which actually occurred, and that, too, in the midst of a retreating army of 90,000 men. Although some of the richer inhabitants had already quitted the city, the main body of the population, in their ignorance of the real state of affairs, remained, uncertain whether to fly or stay. The rich, in their hasty flight, threw aside with indifference the costliest articles of luxury, to make room in their conveyances for clothing and provisions. The most valuable objects lay about the streets disregarded by the Russians, as they were afterwards abandoned on the snow by the French, their next possessors. How eagerly would the latter have bartered them for a little bread or an old blanket!

Rostopshin joined Kutusof's staff in the retreat. The party observed a number of soldiers in advance of them attending carriages. As they approached nearer, Wolzogen remarked that these carriages were the fire-engines of Moscow. Greatly surprised, he asked Rostopshin why he had brought such things with him. Rostopshin replied that "he had good reasons for doing so. Nevertheless," he added, "as regards myself, I have only brought the horse I ride and the clothes I wear."

As the voluntary sacrifice of a capital is a solitary case in history, and the burning of Moscow made a fearful impression upon the conquerors and their leader—as the emperor Alexander never acknowledged that he was a willing party to the destruction, and Rostopshin publicly denied, in a printed declaration, that he was privy to its execution—we must dwell for a few moments on the consideration of the facts and evidence. We shall not repeat what has been so well and critically observed by de Chambray. We shall remark, first of all, that it appears clear to us, from the very language of the proclamation issued by the emperor Alexander during the sojourn of the French in Moscow, and wherein he predicts all the evil consequences of a prolonged stay in the interior of Russia, that the destruction of the capital had been long contemplated in the cabinet.\* The measure of

\* "All the evils," it is said in the proclamation, "which the enemy has thought to inflict upon us will fall at last upon his own head. How-

destroying the capital to save the empire is not, indeed, morally justifiable, but it exhibited as dreadful an energy as was displayed by Danton in the massacres of September. It was also as effectual for its object; and Rostopshin and Danton only aimed at being politicians, and not moralists. The question as to the origin of the conflagration was supposed to have been set at rest by Buturlin, the emperor of Russia's aide-de-camp, who wrote his history under the eye, and, as it were, under the authority of Alexander himself. Rostopshin, on hearing that Buturlin was about to publish his work, requested to see it first, and then made no objection to the responsibility it cast upon him of being the author of the fire. Yet in 1822 he published in Paris a pamphlet, entitled, "*La vérité sur l'incendie de Moscou*," in which he boldly disavows the whole affair. Clausewitz, too, relates, that being in company with Rostopshin seven or eight days after the fire, the governor moved heaven and earth to repudiate the idea of his being the author of it, and used the most passionate exclamations to convince those present.

In reply to Rostopshin's denial, Buturlin, in a subsequent edition of his history, writes:—"It is ungenerous to disbelieve a man who would thus voluntarily despoil himself of the glory of a civic crown, and fall back into the crowd; but, on the other hand, information the most positive leaves no room in the author's mind to doubt that the fire of Moscow was prepared and executed by the Russian authorities;" in other words, by the governor, Rostopshin. It is the emperor's aide-de-camp who thus speaks; wherefore, then, Rostopshin's denial? Wolzogen has furnished us with an explanation in the following anecdote:—"Rostopshin was once,

ever painful it is to see the ancient capital of the empire in his power, HE HAS NOTHING OF IT EXCEPT THE EMPTY WALLS. In his pride, he thinks himself able to prescribe a peace. HE WILL, HOWEVER, FIND HIMSELF DECEIVED IN HIS EXPECTATIONS. Surrounded as he is on all sides, he will find himself compelled, from want of provisions, to cut a way for retreat. The one-half of his army, from its various struggles with us, is already fallen, or has been destroyed by weariness, want, sickness, and desertion. The remainder of his army is in the midst of the empire, plunged, as it were, into the midst of a true and faithful people, and completely surrounded by our armies, one of which is against him in the field, and three others in movement, in order to cut off his retreat," &c.

in my presence, asked downright by a friend ‘Who was the author of the conflagration of Moscow?’ ‘That question,’ he replied, ‘the emperor himself has not yet asked me, and therefore I consider myself bound to give an answer thereto to no one else.’ From which we may conclude,” continues Wolzogen, “that Rostopshin performed that act without the knowledge of the emperor, who purposely avoided being made acquainted with the author, as he should have felt himself called on to visit him with punishment.” “Indeed, it is certain,” says colonel Knollys,\* “that Rostopshin ever remained an unfavoured man in the Russian court, and that Alexander spoke coldly on that which has been extolled by historians as the highest effort of patriotism of modern times.”

For ourselves, we incline to think that Wolzogen’s conclusion comes very near the truth, but does not quite hit the mark. Circumstantial evidence tends to show that the burning of Moscow *was* contemplated beforehand by Alexander. On the other hand, considering his inveterate habits of secrecy and dissimulation, nothing is more likely than that both before and after the event he should choose to keep his own share in it concealed. It is not to be supposed that Rostopshin acted upon formal, not to say written instructions, and he would have been no Russian if he had not had cunning enough to keep his master’s secret and his own.

Instead of pursuing the defeated Russians to Kaluga, where, in accordance with Toll’s previous plan, they took up a position close upon the flank of the French, and threatened to impede their retreat; instead of taking up his winter-quarters in the fertile south, or of quickly turning and fixing himself in Lithuania, in order to collect reinforcements for the ensuing year, Napoleon remained in a state of inaction at Moscow until the 19th of October, in expectation of proposals of peace from Alexander. The terms of peace offered by him on his part to the Russians did not even elicit a reply. His cavalry, already reduced to a great state of exhaustion, were, in the beginning of October, surprised before the city of Tarutino, and repulsed with enormous loss. This at length decided Napoleon upon marching upon Kaluga, but the moment for success had already passed. The

\* In the introduction to his translation of de Fezensac’s “Journal of the Russian Campaign of 1812.”

reinforced and inspirited Russians made such a desperate resistance at Malo-Yaroslavetz, that he resolved to retire by the nearest route, that by which he had penetrated up the country, marked by ashes and pestilential corpses, into Lithuania. Winter had not yet set in, and his ranks were already thinned by famine. Kutusof, with the main body of the Russian army, pursued the retreating French, and again overtook them at Wiazma, 3rd November. Napoleon's hopes now rested on the separate corps d'armée left to his rear on his advance upon Moscow, but they were, notwithstanding the defeat of Wittgenstein's corps by the Bavarians under Wrede, kept in check by fresh Russian armies, and exposed to all the horrors of winter. In Volhynia, Schwartzenberg had zealously endeavoured to spare his troops,\* and had, by his retreat towards the grand-duchy of Warsaw, left Tchitchakof at liberty to turn his arms against Napoleon, against whom Wittgenstein also advanced in the design of blocking up his route, whilst Kutusof incessantly assailed his flank and rear.

On the 6th of November, the frost suddenly set in. The ill-fed horses died by thousands in a single night; the greater part of the cavalry was consequently dismounted, and it was found necessary to abandon part of the booty and artillery. A deep snow shortly afterwards fell and obstructed the path of the fugitive army. The frost became more and more rigorous; but few of the men had sufficient strength left to continue to carry their arms and to cover the flight of the rest. Most of the soldiers threw away their arms and merely endeavoured to preserve life. Napoleon's grand army was scattered over the boundless snow-covered steppes, whose dreary monotony was solely broken by some desolate half-burnt village. Gaunt forms of famine, wan, hollow-eyed, wrapped in strange garments of misery, skins, women's clothes, &c., and with long-grown beards, dragged their faint and weary limbs along, fought for a dead horse whose flesh was greedily torn from the carcase, murdered each other for a morsel of bread, and fell one after the

\* This was Austria's natural policy. In the French despatches, Schwartzenberg was charged with having allowed Tchitchakof to escape in order to pursue the inconsiderable force under Sacken.



other in the deep snow, never again to rise. Frozen corpses lay each morning around the dead ashes of the night-fires.\* Numbers were seen to spring, with a horrid cry of mad exultation, into the flaming houses. Numbers fell into the hands of the Russian boors, who stripped them naked and chased them through the snow. Smolensk was at length reached, but the loss of the greater part of the cannon, the want of ammunition and provisions, rendered their stay in that deserted and half-consumed city impossible. The flight was continued, the Russians incessantly pursuing and harassing the worn-out troops, whose retreat was covered by Ney with all the men still under arms. Cut off at Smolensk, he escaped almost by miracle, by creeping during the night along the banks of the Dniepr and successively repulsing the several Russian corps that threw themselves in his way.† A thaw now took place, and the Beresina, which it was necessary to cross, was full of drift ice, its banks were slippery and impassable, and moreover commanded by Tchitchakof's artillery, whilst the roar of cannon to the rear announced Wittgenstein's approach. Kutusof had this time failed to advance with sufficient rapidity, and Napoleon, the river to his front and enclosed between the Russian armies, owed his escape to the most extraordinary good luck. The corps d'armée under Oudinot and Victor, that had been left behind on his advance upon Moscow, came at the moment of need with fresh troops to his aid. Tchitchakof quitted the bank at the spot where Napoleon intended to make the passage of the Beresina, under an idea of the attempt being made at another point. Napoleon instantly threw two bridges across the stream, and all the able-bodied men crossed in safety. At the moment when the bridges, that had several times

\* The following anecdote is related of the Hessians commanded by prince Emilius of Darmstadt. The prince had fallen asleep in the snow, and four Hessian dragoons, in order to screen him from the north wind, held their cloaks as a wall around him, and were found next morning in the same position—frozen to death. Dead bodies were seen frozen into the most extraordinary positions, gnawing their own hands, gnawing the torn corpses of their comrades. The dead were often covered with snow, and the number of little heaps lying around alone told that of the victims of a single night.

† Napoleon said, "There are 200,000,000 fr. lying in the cellars of the Tuileries; how willingly would I give them to save Ney!"

given way, were choked up by the countless throng bringing up the rear, Wittgenstein appeared and directed his heavy artillery upon the motionless and unarmed crowd. Some regiments, forming the rear-guard, fell, together with all still remaining on the other side of the river, into the hands of the Russians.

The fugitive army was, after this fearful day, relieved, but the temperature again fell to twenty-seven degrees below zero, and the stoutest hearts and frames sank. On the 5th of December, Napoleon, placing himself in a sledge, hurried in advance of his army, nay, preceded the news of his disaster, in order at all events to insure his personal safety and to pass through Germany before measures could be taken for his capture.\* His fugitive army shortly afterwards reached Wilna, but was too exhausted to maintain that position. Enormous magazines, several prisoners, and the rest of the booty, besides six million francs in silver money, fell here into the hands of the Russians. Part of the fugitives escaped to Dantzic, but few crossed the Oder; the Saxons under Regnier were routed and dispersed in a last engagement at Calisch; Poniatowski and the Poles retired to Cracow on the Austrian frontier, protected, as it were, by Schwartzemberg, who remained unassailed by the Russians, and whose neutrality was, not long afterwards, formally recognised.

The Prussians, who had been, meanwhile, occupied with the unsuccessful siege of Riga, and who, like the Austrians, had comparatively husbanded their strength, were now the only hope of the fugitive French. The troops under Macdonald, accordingly, received orders to cover the retreat of

\* He passed with extreme rapidity, *incognito*, through Germany. In Dresden he had a short interview with the king of Saxony, who, had he shut him up at Königstein, would have saved Europe a good deal of trouble.—Napoleon no sooner reached Paris in safety than, in his twenty ninth bulletin, he, for the first time, acquainted the astonished world, hitherto deceived by his false accounts of victory, with the disastrous termination of the campaign. This bulletin was also replete with falsehood and insolence. In his contempt of humanity he even said, "Merely the cowards in the army were depressed in spirit and dreamed of misfortune, the brave were ever cheerful." Thus wrote the man who had both seen and caused all this immeasurable misery! The bulletin concluded with, "His Imperial Majesty never enjoyed better health."

the grand army, but York, instead of obeying, concluded a neutral treaty with the Russians commanded by Diebitsch of Silesia, and remained stationary in Eastern Prussia. The king of Prussia, at that time still at Berlin and in the power of the French, publicly disapproved of the step taken by his general, who was, on the evacuation of Berlin by the French, as publicly rewarded.

The immense army of the conqueror of the world was annihilated. Of those who entered Moscow scarcely twenty thousand, of the half million of men who crossed the Russian frontier but eighty thousand, returned.

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## CHAPTER LXI.

### CAMPAIGNS OF THE GRAND ALLIANCE IN 1813-14—FALL OF NAPOLEON—ALEXANDER'S RETURN TO RUSSIA—CONGRESS OF VIENNA.

THE great campaigns of 1813 and 1814, which ended in the downfall of Napoleon, belong rather to the history of Europe than to that of Russia; we shall, therefore, pass rapidly over their details.

Rallying with amazing promptitude from the tremendous blow he had suffered in Russia, Napoleon raised a fresh army of 300,000 men in the beginning of 1813, in order to crush the insurrection in which all Northern Germany had joined, with the exception of Saxony, after Prussia had openly adhered to the Russian alliance. By the treaty of Kalisch, which established that alliance, Alexander engaged not to lay down his arms until Prussia had recovered the territory it possessed before the war of 1800. Great efforts were now made by the cabinets of St. Petersburg and Berlin to detach Austria from France; and so strongly were the national feelings declared in favour of that policy, that M. de Metternich had the utmost difficulty in withstanding the torrent, and evading the hazard of committing his government prematurely. Temporising with consummate art, he offered the mediation of his government between the hostile parties, and at the same time prosecuted his military pre-

parations on such a scale as would enable Austria to act no subordinate part on the one side or the other in the coming struggle. Meanwhile, hostilities began; the Russians and Prussians were defeated by Napoleon at Lützen and at Bautzen, where Alexander commanded the allied armies in person; and they were fortunate in concluding an armistice with him at Pleisswitz on the 4th of June, 1813. They availed themselves of this truce to reinforce their armies, and more than 60,000 fresh troops reached the seat of war from the south and the middle of Russia.

On the 27th, Austria signed a treaty at Reichenbach, in Silesia, with Russia and Prussia, by which she bound herself to declare war with France, in case Napoleon had not, before the termination of the armistice, accepted the terms of peace about to be proposed to him. A pretended congress for the arrangement of the treaty was again agreed to by both sides; but Napoleon delayed to grant full powers to his envoy, and the allies, who had meanwhile heard of Wellington's victory at Vittoria, and the expulsion of the French from Spain, gladly seized this pretext to break off the negotiations. Meanwhile, Metternich, whose voice was virtually to decide Napoleon's fate, met him at Dresden with an offer of peace, on condition of the surrender of the French conquests in Germany. Napoleon, with an infatuation only equalled by his attempts to negotiate at Moscow, spurned the proposal, and even went the length of charging count Metternich with taking bribes from England. The conference, which was conducted on Napoleon's part in so insulting a manner, and at times in tones of passion so violent as to be overheard by the attendants, lasted till near midnight on the 10th of August, the day with which the armistice was to expire. The fatal hour passed by, and that night count Metternich drew up the declaration of war, on the part of his government, against France. Austria coalesced with Russia and Prussia, and the Austrian general, prince Schwartzberg, was appointed generalissimo of the whole of the allied armies.

The plan of the allies was to advance with the main body under Schwartzberg, 190,000 strong, through the Hartz mountains to Napoleon's rear. Blücher, with 95,000 men, was meanwhile to cover Silesia, or in case of an attack by Napoleon's main body, to retire before it, and draw it further



eastward. Bernadotte, crown prince of Sweden, was to cover Berlin with 90,000 men, and in case of a victory, was to form a junction, rearward of Napoleon, with the main body of the allied army. A mixed division under Wallmoden, 30,000 strong, was destined to watch Davoust in Hamburg, whilst the Bavarian and Italian frontiers were respectively guarded by 25,000 Austrians under prince Reuss, and 40,000 Austrians under Hiller. Napoleon's main body, consisting of 250,000 men, was concentrated in and around Dresden.

The campaign opened with the march of a French force under Oudinot against Berlin. This attack having completely failed, Napoleon marched in person against Blücher, who cautiously retired before him. Dresden being thus left uncovered, the allies changed their plan of operations, and marched straight upon the Saxon capital. But they arrived too late, Napoleon having already returned thither, after despatching Vandamme's corps to Bohemia, to seize the passes and cut off Schwartzberg's retreat. The allies attempted to storm Dresden, on the 26th of August, but were repulsed after suffering a frightful loss. On the following day Napoleon assumed the offensive, cut off the left wing of the allies, and made an immense number of prisoners, chiefly Austrians. The main body fled in all directions; part of the troops disbanded, and the whole must have been annihilated but for the misfortune of Vandamme, who was taken prisoner, with his whole corps, on the 29th. It was at the battle of Dresden that Moreau, who had come from his exile in America to aid the allies against his old rival Napoleon, was killed by a cannon ball whilst he was speaking to the emperor Alexander.

At the same time (August 26) a splendid victory was gained by Blücher, on the Katzbach, over Macdonald, who reached Dresden almost alone, to say to Napoleon, "Your army of the Bober is no longer in existence." This disaster to the French arms was followed by the defeat of Ney at Dennewitz by the Prussians and Swedes on the 6th of September. Napoleon's generals were thrown back in every quarter, with immense loss, on Dresden, towards which the allies now advanced again, threatening to enclose it on every side. Napoleon manœuvred until the beginning of October, with the view of executing a *coup de main* against Schwart-

zenberg and Blücher, but their caution foiled him, and at length he found himself compelled to retreat, lest he should be cut off from the Rhine, for Blücher had crossed the Elbe, joined Bernadotte, and approached the head of the main army under Schwartzberg. Moreover, the Bavarian army under Wrede declared against the French on the 8th of October, and was sent to the Main to cut off their retreat. Marching to Leipsic, the emperor there encountered the allies on the 16th of October, and fought an indecisive action, which, however, was in his case equivalent to a defeat. He strove to negotiate a separate peace with the emperor of Austria, as he had before done with regard to the emperor of Russia, but no answer was returned to his proposals. After some partial engagements on the 17th, the main battle was renewed on the 18th; it raged with prodigious violence all day, and ended in the defeat of Napoleon; Leipsic was stormed on the following day, and the French emperor narrowly escaped being taken prisoner. He had lost 60,000 men in the four days' battle; with the remainder of his troops he made a hasty and disorderly retreat, and after losing many more in his disastrous flight, he crossed the Rhine on the 20th of October with 70,000 men. The garrisons he had left behind gradually surrendered, and by November all Germany, as far as the Rhine, was freed from the presence of the French.

In the following month the allies simultaneously invaded France in three directions:—Bülow from Holland, Blücher from Coblenz, and Schwartzberg, with the allied sovereigns, by Switzerland and the Jura; whilst Wellington also was advancing from the Pyrenees, at the head of the army which had liberated the Peninsula. In twenty-five days after their passage of the Rhine the allied armies had succeeded, almost without firing a shot, in wresting a third of France from the grasp of Napoleon. Their united forces stretched diagonally across France in a line three hundred miles long, from the frontiers of Flanders to the banks of the Rhone. On the other hand, the French emperor, though his force was little more than a third of that which was at the command of the allies, had the advantage of an incomparably more concentrated position, his troops being all stationed within the limits of a narrow triangle, of which

Paris, Laon, and Troyes formed the angles. Besides this, there was no perfect unanimity among his enemies. Austria, leaning on the matrimonial alliance, was reluctant to push matters to extremities, if it could possibly be avoided; Russia and Prussia were resolute to overthrow Napoleon's dynasty; whilst the councils of England, which in this diversity held the balance, were as yet divided as to the final issue. There was a prospect, therefore, that the want of concert between the allies would afford profitable opportunities to the military genius of the French emperor.

On the 29th of January, Napoleon made an unexpected attack on Blücher's corps at Brienne, in which the Prussian marshal narrowly escaped, being made prisoner. But not being pursued with sufficient vigour, and having procured reinforcements, Blücher had his revenge at La Rothière, where he attacked Napoleon with superior forces and routed him. Still Schwartzemberg delayed his advance and divided his troops, whilst Blücher, pushing rapidly forward on Paris, was again unexpectedly attacked by the main body of the French army, and all his corps, as they severally advanced, were defeated with terrible loss, between the 10th and 14th of February. On the 17th, Napoleon routed the advanced guard of the main army at Nangis, and again on the 18th he inflicted a heavy defeat on them at Montereau. Augereau, meanwhile, with an army levied in the south of France, had driven the Austrians under Bubna into Switzerland, and had posted himself at Geneva, in the rear of the allies, who became so alarmed as to resolve on a general retreat, and propose an armistice. Negotiations for peace had been in progress for several weeks at Chatillon, and the allies were now more than ever desirous that the terms they offered should be accepted. But so confident was Napoleon in the returning good fortune of his arms, that he would not even consent to a suspension of hostilities while the conferences for an armistice were going on. As for the conference at Chatillon, he used it only as a means to gain time, fully resolved not to purchase peace by the reduction of his empire within the ancient limits of the French monarchy.

Blücher became furious on being informed of the intention to retreat, and with the approval of the emperor Alexander, he resolved to separate from the main army, and push

on for Paris. Being reinforced on the Marne by Winzingerode and Bülow, he encountered Napoleon at Craone on the 7th of March. The battle was one of the most obstinately contested of the whole revolutionary war; the loss on both sides was enormous, but neither could claim a victory. Two days afterwards the emperor was defeated at Laon; but Blücher's army was reduced to inactivity by fatigue and want of food.

Napoleon now turned upon the grand army, which he encountered at Arcis-sur-Aube; but after an indecisive action, he deliberately retreated, not towards Paris, but in the direction of the Rhine. His plan was to occupy the fortresses in the rear of the allies, form a junction with Augereau, who was then defending Lyons, and, with the aid of a general rising of the peasantry in Alsace and Lorraine, surround and cut off the invaders, or, at least, compel them to retreat to the Rhine. But this plan being made known to the allies by an intercepted letter from Napoleon to the empress, they frustrated it by at once marching with flying banners upon Paris, leaving behind only 10,000 men, under Winzingerode, to amuse Napoleon, and mask their movement. After repulsing Mortier and Marmont, and capturing the forces under Pacthod and Amey, the allies defiled within sight of Paris on the 29th. On the 30th they met with a spirited resistance on the heights of Belleville and Montmartre; but the city, in order to escape bombardment, capitulated during the night; and on the 31st, the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia made a peaceful entry. The emperor of Austria had remained at Lyons.

A special declaration of the emperor Alexander, published immediately after this entry into the capital, confirmed the pacific assurances already made in the proclamation of the generalissimo of the allied troops; but with this addition, that the confederated sovereigns would no longer treat with Napoleon, or with any member of his family. They had all along declared that they were come to make war, not on France, but on the emperor, and they were unanimous in saying that the wishes of France should be consulted in the very first place, as regarded the choice of a new government. Now the wishes of the wealthy classes, which were assumed to be those of the nation, were strongly expressed in favour



of the Bourbons, and the Bourbons accordingly were bestowed upon them. The restoration and maintenance of legitimate monarchy, which afterwards became the leading principle of the so-called Holy Alliance, had up to this time formed no part of the designs of the confederates ; this was a policy instituted at a later date, and its author was prince Metternich. M. de Vitrolles, an agent of the count d'Artois, had an interview at Troyes with the emperor Alexander, and found him possessed with a strong repugnance to the Bourbons. "The re-establishment of that dynasty," he said, "would open the door to terrible acts of vengeance. And then, what voices are raised in France for the Bourbons ? Are a few emigrants, who come and whisper in our ears that their country is royalist, to be deemed representatives of public opinion ?" M. de Vitrolles ably combated Alexander's objections, and observed, "Believe me, sire, you would not have lost so many soldiers in this country, had you made the question of occupation a French question."—"The very thing I have myself said a hundred times," was Alexander's animated reply. The interview lasted three hours ; and when it was ended, Alexander had been gained over to the cause of Louis XVIII.

Alexander's gracious demeanour exalted to enthusiasm the favourable impression he had made upon the French by his moderation in victory. There was grace and dignity in the words he addressed to the Parisians : "If I arrive late, accuse only French valour." This was certainly the brightest epoch in his reign. From the moment he had entered upon the war for the liberation of Europe, after having successfully defended his own territory, Alexander seemed to feel his course clear, and no hesitation, no indirectness, interfered with his actions. He saw his end, and determined to reach it at any price. In order to avoid jealousies and rivalries, he yielded to another the supreme command, which he had coveted for himself ; but he was ever found in the foremost ranks. At Dresden, at Leipsic, everywhere it was so. When Schwartzemberg hesitated to march upon Paris, Alexander himself undertook to convince him that the measure was practicable, and his opinion prevailed. He had no interest in reducing the French to a political nullity, for the power of Austria and that of the nation which governed the seas

and possessed India could not be allowed to remain without a counterpoise. France owes it to Alexander that after that mortal struggle she was not more deeply prostrated. His cultivated intellect carried great weight in the councils of the allies, and often imposed silence upon paltry fears and trifling objections. The Jacobins, who terrified other nations, did not arouse his fears. In Paris, he made choice of men of all parties to counsel and inform him, and received with favour and gratitude his old friend, general La Harpe. He preferred Pozzo di Borgo to be his ambassador at the court of the Tuileries, a step which caused some jealousy.

From France Alexander went to London, where the allied sovereigns were assembled as guests of the prince regent, and embarked at Dover on the 27th of June to return to the continent. His first care was to reorganise and augment his army, and he exerted himself so well, that it is said he could, in the following year, have brought into the field 300,000 men and 2000 pieces of cannon. The truth of this assertion, however, was never tested.

His senate decreed to him the title of *Blessed*, and sent three of its members, Kurakin, Tormassof, and Soltykof, to prevail on him to accept this political canonisation. He replied to the deputies: "I have always endeavoured to set the nation an example of simplicity and moderation. I could not accept the title you offer me without departing from my principles." And when it was proposed to erect a monument in his honour, he said, "It is for posterity to honour my memory in that way, if it deems me worthy of it."

The congress of Vienna was opened on the 30th of May, for the purpose of redistributing the dependencies wrested from the empire of France. The close union which had subsisted between the sovereigns under the pressure of a common danger was near being destroyed when they came to divide the spoil. The king of Saxony was the only German potentate who had not forsaken the cause of Napoleon. Prussia desired to absorb the whole of his dominions, and this claim, supported by Russia, was opposed by Austria, France, and England. Alexander on his own part insisted on retaining the grand duchy of Warsaw, and re-establishing it as a constitutional kingdom of Poland. England looked with displeasure on the aggrandisement of Russia in that direction;

she was afraid lest the czar should take the lion's share, and in contempt of the treaties which had stipulated the tripartite division of the Polish provinces, should seize upon the whole for himself. This gave rise to an animated correspondence between the emperor Alexander and lord Castlereagh, then the plenipotentiary of Great Britain, at the congress of Vienna. In that correspondence we first meet with this declaration of lord Castlereagh, a cry of alarm, as it were, uttered as early as 1814 in the ears of Europe:—"The conquest of Poland was effected principally to bring the Russian nation into closer communication with the rest of Europe, and to open a vast field and a higher and more striking theatre for the exercise of her strength and talents, and for the satisfaction of her pride, her passions, and her interests."

This idea is afterwards more fully developed in a memorandum (dated October 12th, 1814) addressed to the cabinet of St. Petersburg, and especially in the following passage:

"The reflections to which this measure gives rise, must necessarily have inspired the utmost alarm, filled the courts of Austria and Prussia with the greatest consternation, and spread general terror among all the states of Europe. The forced union of a country so important and populous as the duchy of Warsaw, which contains more than 4,000,000 of inhabitants, to the empire of Russia, so recently aggrandised by the conquest of Finland, her acquisitions in Moldavia, and her late addition on the side of Prussia; her progressive march from the Niemen towards the centre of Germany; her occupation of all the fortresses of the duchy, which exposes the capitals of Austria and Prussia to her attacks, without leaving them any line of defence on the frontier; the invitation given to the Poles to rally round the standards of the emperor of Russia for the regeneration of their kingdom; the new hopes and encouragements given, and the new scenes opened to the activity and intrigues of this unstable and turbulent people; the prospect of witnessing a revival of those tumultuous discussions in which the Poles have so long involved their own country and their neighbours; the fear which this measure inspires, as the cause of a new and approaching war; the loss of every reasonable hope of enjoying present peace and tranquillity; all these considerations, and many others, now present themselves

to general attention, and *justify the alarm conceived by the whole of Europe.*"

England was therefore unwilling that Austria and Prussia should be excluded from the partition, and that Russia should obtain at once Cracow and Thorn; she pleaded the cause of these two powers very warmly. "How can it be supposed," continued her principal representative at the congress of Vienna, "that in stipulating the dissolution of the duchy of Warsaw, they could have consented to the far more dangerous reconstitution of a kingdom of Poland dependent on the crown of Russia; *an arrangement ten times more menacing and alarming for their respective states?* Even though the terms of the treaty were as ambiguous as they are clear and conclusive, nobody could interpret them so as to imply that the two powers that entered into an engagement for the deliverance of Europe, were induced to embrace this noble cause *by signing their own ruin*, and exposing themselves, in a military point of view, to the attack of a powerful neighbour."

Alexander, under the influence of prince Czartoryski's ideas, and more disposed, perhaps, from his craving for the applause of Europe, to play the part of constitutional king of Poland, than that of autocrat of Russia, represented the necessity of restoring a country to the Poles, and of remedying the sad fate which the threefold partition had inflicted on them. But the British negotiator showed himself to be little affected by the czar's political sensibility; he remained inflexible upon the point in dispute, and the remonstrances which he returns are not without a certain tinge of irony.

"If a moral necessity," says he, "require that the situation of the Poles be ameliorated by so decisive a change as the re-establishment of their monarchy would be, then, let this measure be executed on the broad and liberal principle of rendering them really independent as a nation, instead of making of the two-thirds of their country a formidable military weapon in the hands of a single power. So liberal a measure would be applauded by all Europe; Austria and Prussia, far from opposing it, would acquiesce in it with pleasure. This would be, it is true, a sacrifice on the part of Russia, according to the usual calculation of states; but



unless your imperial majesty be disposed to make these sacrifices to your moral duty at the expense of your empire, you have no moral right to make such experiments to the detriment of your allies and your neighbours."

The emperor took the trouble to reply in person to the memorandum; he did so, on the 30th of October, with moderation, endeavouring to extenuate the importance of the territories obtained or claimed, but also complaining of the bitter terms which had been used towards him, and without dissembling that he should have expected more justice on the part of his allies, in return for his efforts and *the great resources* devoted by him to the war which had *emancipated* Europe; an emancipation of which he attributes a large share to himself.

"It is not doubtful," says he, "that on the issue of the present struggle depends the future destiny of the states of Europe, and the object of all my endeavours and sacrifices has been to see the members of our alliance recover or acquire an extent of territory likely to maintain the general equilibrium. Therefore, I do not see how, with such principles, the present congress could become a centre of intrigues and animosity, a theatre of unjust efforts to acquire more power. I refrain from turning this phrase against any one of my allies, how extraordinary soever it may have appeared to me to find it in your letter. It is for the world that has witnessed the principles of my conduct, from the passage of the Vistula to that of the Seine, to judge whether the desire of acquiring a population of one million of souls more, or of arrogating any preponderance to myself, was capable of directing any one of my acts.

"The purity of my intentions renders me strong. If I persist in the order of things that I would wish to establish in Poland, it is because I am intimately convinced in my conscience that it would be an act more useful to the general good than to my own private interest.

"As to the care of my own subjects,"\* adds he, with

\* Lord Castlereagh had insinuated that the experiment which Alexander meditated relatively to Poland, might perhaps *excite in his own states a political ferment*. Chateaubriand entertained similar views, remarking that "the decline of the one country or the other must be the inevitable consequence."

dignity, "and to my duties towards them, *it is for me to know them*; and nothing but the uprightness of your intentions could have made me revert to the impression which the reading of this paragraph in your letter had produced upon me."

The emperor endeavours afterwards to tranquillise lord Castlereagh's fears, by representing the danger as merely imaginary. He allows with a good grace that in case of any undue ambition on the part of Russia, everybody would be against her. "Since this system," he replies, "is, as the memorandum affirms, contrary to that of Austria, Prussia, France, and the English ministry, the slightest attempt would reunite all these powers, which Turkey would eagerly join, against Russia alone, and abandoned." Lord Castlereagh, however, would not give up the point; but replied in another memorandum.

This, therefore, was the aspect which the question of the union of Poland with Russia presented as early as 1814; it was seen to be fraught with real danger to Europe.

Whilst the conquerors were parcelling out Europe without the least regard to the rights or interests of the nations they disposed of, and whilst they were wrangling over their selfish work, they were startled into sudden concord by the news that Napoleon had escaped from Elba, and landed in France. Had this event happened a few months later, he would not, perhaps, have had to fight against a confederacy, for already Austria, France, and England were united by a secret convention against Russia and Prussia. But all disputes were now hastily adjusted, and among the rest that relating to Cracow and Poland. Russia had laid claim to Cracow as an appurtenance of the duchy of Warsaw, while Austria had asserted her right to it as one of which she had been despoiled by the peace of Schönbrunn. Finally, it was agreed by the treaty of Vienna (May 13, 1815), that that city, with the territory which had been assigned it, should form an independent and neutral republic, under the protection of Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Besides the city of Cracow, a district containing 8000 or 9000 inhabitants was dismembered from the duchy of Warsaw, and was conferred on Prussia under the title of the grand duchy of Posnania. The remainder was united to the empire of Russia as a distinct state, under the name of the kingdom of Poland,

having its own constitution and a separate administration. It contained 2000 German square miles, with a population of 2,500,000.

The Russians, who were to have formed the army of the Middle Rhine, were unable, though making forced marches, to arrive in time to take part in the brief campaign which terminated Napoleon's reign of the Hundred Days.

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## CHAPTER LXII.

FAILURE OF ALEXANDER'S EXPERIMENT IN POLAND—HIS CONSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS FOR RUSSIA—THE VIZIERSHIP OF COUNT ARAKTCHIEFF—THE MILITARY COLONIES—EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS—ALEXANDER'S RENUNCIATION OF LIBERALISM AFTER 1815.

THE re-establishment of Poland was rather an embarrassment and a source of weakness to Russia than an advantage. The Russians being entirely devoid of those liberties which the privileged class of Poland enjoyed under the protection of the czar, jealousy was the natural and necessary result. The conquerors, the true and native children of the autocrat, saw themselves less favoured than the conquered nation. It is true that the absence of political liberty was no real misfortune to the masses in Russia, for in the state of things then existing, one class only would have monopolised them. It was rather that general state of things which itself called for reform. The aristocracy was little eager to second the sovereign in granting rights and immunities to those below themselves, emancipating the serfs, and creating a class of free cultivators of the soil. But the aristocracy had its own claims; it desired an upright and paternal administration, justice which should be freely and equally administered to all, and which should know no respect of persons. The re-establishment of peace and the return of the czar to his dominions, seemed to promise the Russians the gratification of their hopes. The general expectation was deceived. The monarch's person was indeed at home, but his attention and his thoughts were fixed on Europe. The conclusion of the

Holy Alliance (Sept. 16, 1815) deeply interested him, and absorbed his whole soul.

Alexander had by this time become the disciple of the celebrated Madame de Krudener, who had repaired to Paris, in 1814, for the purpose of evangelising the allied sovereigns there assembled. Among them all, she found in the emperor of Russia alone the qualities requisite to the development of a mystic spirit of devotion, namely, quick sensibility, and a lively imagination, imperfectly controlled by a weak will and an unstable judgment. The Holy Alliance, which the high contracting parties placed by direct invocation under the sanction of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, was professedly a union of Christian monarchs in the pious work of directing the whole course of European politics in strict accordance with the benign principles and precepts of Christianity. Frederick the Great used to say, that Providence was always on the side of the strongest battalions, and the imperial and royal members of the Holy Alliance soon showed that in their opinion Christianity consisted above all things in upholding their own arbitrary power. Though Alexander was the author of that coalition, Metternich became its ruling spirit, and the visionary emperor was his dupe and his tool, fast bound to the stationary system of Austria, even whilst with characteristic inconsistency he was sowing the seeds of death in Poland by his dilettante liberalism.

The constitution granted to Poland in 1815, based the government on a tripartite division of power; the three estates of the realm being the king, a senate, and a house of representatives—the two latter being comprehended under the name of a diet. The executive was vested in the king, and in functionaries by him appointed. The crown was hereditary; it was the prerogative of the king to declare war, convoke, prorogue, or dissolve the diet. He was empowered to appoint a viceroy, who, unless a member of the royal family, was to be a Pole. The king or viceroy was assisted by a council of state and five responsible ministers, their several departments being instruction, justice, interior, and police, war, finance. These five ministers were subordinate to the president of the council. Considering the exhaustion, humiliation, and misery to which Poland had been reduced,



such a constitution was apparently a great boon, for it guaranteed civil, political, and religious freedom; but by the very nature of things it was foredoomed to destruction.

The first Polish diet assembled at Warsaw on the 27th of March, 1818. The grand-duke Constantine, commander-in-chief of the Polish army, was elected a deputy by the faubourg of Praga, and during the session was obliged to renounce his privilege as a senator, because, by the terms of the constitution, no person could sit in both houses. He was elected by a majority of 103 votes to 6, an evident proof that the new reign had excited the liveliest hopes. The emperor arrived at Warsaw on the 13th of March; he devoted himself laboriously to the examination of state affairs, and on the 27th he opened the diet in person with a speech in the French language. He said, "The organisation which existed in vigorous maturity in your country permitted the instant establishment of what I have given you, by putting into operation the principles of those liberal institutions which have never ceased to be the object of my solicitude, and whose salutary influence *I hope by the aid of God to disseminate through all the countries which He has confided to my care.* Thus you have afforded me the means of showing my country what I had long since prepared for her, and what she shall obtain when the elements of a work so important shall have attained their necessary development."

There is no reason to doubt that Alexander cherished these intentions in his own sanguine but unpractical way. The enfranchisement of the serfs of Esthonia, undertaken in 1802 and completed in 1816, and that of the serfs of Courland in 1817, exhibit the same principles. And when in 1819 the deputies of the Livonian nobility submitted to the approbation of the emperor a plan to pursue the same course with the serfs of their province, the following was his remarkable reply: "I am delighted to see that the nobility of Livonia have fulfilled my expectations. You have set an example that ought to be imitated. You have acted in the spirit of our age, and have felt that liberal principles alone can form the basis of the people's happiness."

"Such," says Schnitzler, "was constantly, during nearly twenty years, the language of Alexander. He deeply mourned the entire absence of all guarantees for the social

well-being of the empire. His regret was marked in his reply to Madame de Staël, when she complimented him on the happiness of his people, who, without a constitution, were blessed with such a sovereign: 'I am but a lucky accident.' " After 1815 he was no longer even that.

A year had hardly elapsed from the time when Alexander had addressed the words we have quoted to the diet at Warsaw, ere the Poles began to complain that the constitution was not observed in its essential provisions; that their viceroy Zaionczek had but the semblance of authority, whilst all the real power was in the hands of the grand-duke Constantine, and of Novosiltzof, the Russian commissioner. The bitterness of their discontent was in proportion with the ardour of their short-lived joy. Russian despotism reverted to its essential conditions; the liberty of the press was suspended; and in 1819 the national army was dissolved. On the other hand, the spirit of opposition became so strong in the diet, that in 1820, a measure relating to criminal procedure, which was pressed forward with all the force of government influence, was rejected by a majority of 120 to 3. Thenceforth there was nothing but mutual distrust between Poland and Russia.

The institutions which Alexander had given to Poland worked no happy results, and those which he designed for Russia would have been little better. He failed even to accomplish the good which he might have effected without organic changes. But he felt himself arrested by innumerable difficulties. He often wanted instruments to carry out his will, oftener still the firmness to support them against court cabals. The immense distances to be traversed, which, according to Custine, the emperor Nicholas feels to be one of the plagues of his empire, presented the same obstacle to Alexander. Again, his desire to exercise European influence distracted his attention from his proper work at home, and the empire sank back into its old routine. Discouraged at last, and awakening as he grew older from some of the illusions of his youth, he gave way to indolence more and more. He saw himself alone, standing opposed to an immense festering corruption; in despair he ceased to struggle against it; and in the latter portion of his reign he grievously neglected the care of his government.

The helm thus deserted by the pilot passed into the hands of general Araktcheief, a shrewd, active man, devoted to business, perhaps also well-intentioned, but a Russian of the old school, without the necessary enlightenment, without political probity—arbitrary, imperious, and enthralled by qualities and notions inimical to progress; governed, moreover, by unworthy connexions of a particular kind. Under the rule of Araktcheief the censorship became more severe than ever. Foreign books were admitted with difficulty, and were subject to tyrannical restrictions; many professors of the new university of St. Petersburg were subjected to a despotic and galling inquisition; others were required most rigidly to base their course of instructions upon a programme printed and issued by the supreme authority. Freemasonry was suppressed. Foreign travellers were surrounded with troublesome and vexatious formalities. Many rigorous regulations, which had been long disused and almost forgotten, were revived. In short, Araktcheief exercised with intolerable severity a power which he derived from a master who carried gentleness to an extreme of weakness—who loved to discuss the rights of humanity, and whose heart bled for its sufferings.

It was by the advice of Araktcheief that military colonies were established in Russia, in 1819. The system was not new, for Austria had already adopted it on some of her frontiers; but its introduction into Russia was a novelty from which great results were expected, and which neighbouring states regarded with much uneasiness. The plan was to quarter the soldiers upon the crown-peasants, build military villages according to a fixed plan, apportion a certain quantity of field to every house, and form a statute-book, according to which these new colonies should be governed. The plan at once received the approbation of the czar. It was the intention of Araktcheief, by means of these colonies, to reduce the expense entailed by the subsistence of the army, and to compel the soldier to contribute to his own maintenance by cultivating the soil; to strengthen the ranks by a reserve, picked from among the crown-peasants, equal in number to the colony of soldiers; to furnish the soldier with a home, in which his wife and children might continue to dwell when the exigencies of war called him away; and to increase the popu-

lation, and with it the cultivation of the soil, in a land where hands only are wanting to change many a steppe into a garden, many a scattered village into a thriving town.

Russian colonies were thus established in the governments of Novgorod, Mohilef, Kharkof, Kiev, Podolia, and Kherson; that is to say, in the neighbourhood of Poland, Austria, and Turkey. Political and military considerations had combined to fix the choice of localities for these colonies. In consequence of the vast dimensions of the Russian empire, troops raised in the north and west can only reach the southern provinces after long intervals; and if, on any emergency, Russia should wish to concentrate a large part of her forces in the neighbourhood of the southern and western frontiers, such a concentration, it was thought, would be greatly facilitated by the fact of military colonies, with a large population, being already on the spot. The villages destined for the reception of military colonies were all to be inhabited by crown-peasants; these people were now relieved from the duties they had been accustomed to pay to the government, in consideration of their quartering men in their houses. All peasants more than fifty years of age were selected to be so-called head colonists, or master-colonists. Every master-colonist received forty acres of land, for which he had to maintain a soldier and his family, and to find fodder for a horse, if a corps of cavalry happened to be quartered in the village. The soldier, on his part, was bound to assist the colonist in the cultivation of his field and the farm labours generally, whenever his military duties did not occupy the whole day. The soldier, who in this way became domiciliated in the family, received the name "military peasant." The officers had the power of choosing the soldiers who were to be quartered upon the master-colonists. If the colonist had several sons, the eldest became his adjunct; the second was enrolled among the reserve; the third might become a military peasant; the others were enrolled as colonists or pupils. Thus, in the new arrangements, two entirely different elements were fused together, and one population was, so to speak, engrafted upon another.

The labour of these agricultural soldiers is of course dependent upon the will of the officers, for they can only attend to agricultural work when freed from military duty. The



man himself continues half peasant, half soldier, until he has served for five-and-twenty years, if he be a Russian, or twenty years if he be a Pole. At the expiration of this time he is at liberty to quit the service, and his place is filled up from the reserve. Beside the house of each master-colonist stands another dwelling constructed in exactly the same manner, and occupied by the reserve-man, who may be regarded as a double of the soldier. He is selected by the colonel of the regiment from among the peasants, and is generally a son or relation of the master-colonist. The reserve-man is instructed in all the duties appertaining to the soldier's profession, and is educated in every particular, so that he may be an efficient substitute. If the agricultural soldier dies, or falls in battle, his reserve-man immediately takes his place. The colonist now takes the place of the reserve-man, who in his turn is succeeded by the pupil. The master-colonist, peasant-soldier, and reserve-man, may all choose their wives at pleasure, and they are encouraged to marry. The women, on the other hand, are allowed to marry within the limits of their colony, but not beyond it. The sons of the master-colonists, soldiers, or reserve-men, between the ages of thirteen and seventeen, are called "Cantonists." They are drilled like soldiers, and occasionally attend schools. The children between the ages of eight and thirteen visit the school of the village in which their parents dwell, and are exercised in the use of arms on alternate days. Like the Cantonists, they wear uniforms, and are looked upon as future soldiers. All male children are sent to school, where, by the method of reciprocal education, they are taught to read, write, and cipher, alternately with their military studies. They are taught to recite a kind of catechism, setting forth the duties of the soldier; they learn the use of the sabre; are practised in riding, and, when they have attained the age of seventeen years, are mustered in the head-quarters of the regiment, and divided into corps, those who distinguish themselves by attention and diligence being appointed officers. The several component parts of a colony are as follows:

1. The head colonist—the master of the house and possessor of the estate.
2. His assistant, who joins him in the cultivation of his farm.
3. The military peasant, who likewise takes part in agricultural labour.
4. The reserve-man,

who supplies the place of the soldier in case of need. 5. The Cantonist, between the ages of thirteen and seventeen. 6. The boys, from eight to thirteen years old. 7. Male children under the age of eight years. 8. The female population. 9. The invalids.

The colonies in the south of Russia comprise 380 villages in the provinces of Kherson, Kharkof, and Ekaterinoslaf. The crown has here 30,000 peasants. Every village contains two or three squadrons, according to its size; thus they contain altogether 80,000 men. These military districts, as the regions are called in which the colonies occur, are so strictly divided from the remaining portions of the provinces, that no man can enter them without a special passport, granted by the military authorities. Their constitution is entirely military, even the postal service being executed by soldiers. At every station a subaltern receives the order for post-horses and inspects it; another soldier harnesses the horses; a third greases the wheels; and a fourth mounts the box as coachman. As soon as the military coat appears in sight, every peasant on the high-road stops, plants his hands stiffly against his sides, and stands in a military attitude of "attention."

The laws are administered in the first instance by a detachment from every squadron, one of the officers acting as president. From the decision of this tribunal an appeal can be made to the regimental council, which is composed of the colonel, two captains, and six deputies from among the colonists. The judgments of this court are laid before the commandant-in-chief of the colonies, against whose decision neither soldiers nor colonists may protest, officers alone having the privilege of appealing to the emperor. In the head-quarters of every regiment a copy of the code of laws is kept, and in most military villages churches are to be found, where a priest, who belonged to the church before the village was transformed into a military colony, performs the service.

The success of the military colonies in Russia has fallen far short of the expectations of their founders.\*. To the un-

\* On the accession of Nicholas, Arakcheief suffered the fate that usually attends the favourite of a deceased sovereign, and fell into disgrace. Wishing to recommend himself to the favourable notice of the

fortunate crown serfs they have brought an intolerable aggravation of their wretchedness, by making them feel their slavery even in their homes and their domestic affections. The consequence has been seen in the madness of their revenge on several occasions when they have broken out into rebellion, as for instance at Novgorod, in 1832. "Nothing," says Dr. Lee,\* "could be sold without the knowledge of the officers in these military colonies. It is said that when a hen lays an egg, it is necessary to make an entry of the fact in a register kept for this and other equally important purposes. I was told that when a priest was speaking to some of these peasants about the punishments of hell, they answered they dreaded them not, because a worse hell than that in which they were doomed to pass their whole lives here, could not possibly exist."†

new emperor, he presented to him a memorial respecting his own creation—the military colonies. He had drawn it up for Alexander, and if we may believe the abstract of it inserted in the "*Ephémérides Géographiques*" of Weimar, the following is nearly its substance. Contrary to every expectation, it states, seven-eighths of the colonised soldiers fall to the charge of government; the male children of one district do not suffice to complete the recruiting of the regiment; the state is obliged to sacrifice the whole of the revenue arising from its lands, and the peasants are everywhere dissatisfied with their new position. To extend colonisation to the whole army would absorb four thousand million rubles, supposing the government able to devote so enormous a sum to that purpose.

\* "The Last Days of Alexander," &c.

† "The military colonies please one at first sight from the order and cleanliness everywhere prevailing in them; but their population is said to be wretched in the highest degree. When the emperor Alexander was here, some years ago, he went round visiting every house; and on every table he found a dinner prepared, one of the principal articles of which consisted of a young pig roasted. The prince Volkhonski suspected there was some trick, and cut off the tail of the pig and put it in his pocket. On entering the next house the pig was presented, but without the tail, upon which prince Volkhonski said to the emperor, 'I think this is an old friend.' The emperor demanded his meaning, when he took out the tail from his pocket and applied it to the part from which it had been removed. The emperor did not relish the jest, and it was supposed this piece of pleasantry led to his disgrace. A more effectual, though bold and dangerous method of exposing to the emperor the deceptions carried on throughout the military colonies under count Araktcheief, could not have been adopted than that which prince Volkhonski had recourse to on this occasion. From that time count Araktcheief became his bitter enemy."—*Lee*.

Alexander's religious fervour was perfectly exempt from sectarian bigotry. He not merely tolerated his Christian subjects of every denomination, but cordially sympathised with them in their religious concerns; and he warmly encouraged the efforts of the English Bible Society in his dominions. It was, then, from purely political motives that in 1815—fifteen years after the readmission of the Jesuits into Russia, he excluded them from the two capitals; and in 1820 decreed their expulsion from the whole empire. The property and revenues of the order were confiscated for the benefit of the Roman Catholic churches in Russia, and about 750 of its members were conveyed across the frontiers at the expense of the government.

We have now touched upon all that is worthy of note in Alexander's home policy during the last ten years of his reign. That portion of his life was spent in perpetual motion and perpetual agitation to little or no good purpose, whilst his proper functions were delegated to count Arakhtchief, whose name was a word of terror to every one in Russia. Absorbed by affairs foreign to the interests of his empire, Alexander was consistent or persevering in nothing but his efforts to enforce the dark, stagnant policy of Austria, which had become that of the Holy Alliance. He was present at the congresses of Aix-la-Chapelle, Troppau, Laybach, and Verona, and zealously participated in all the repressive measures concerted there. He was the soul of the deliberations held at the latter place in 1822, and whilst he refused aid to the Greeks in their rebellion against their "legitimate sovereign," the sultan, he was all but inclined to use constraint to his ally, France, to compel her, in spite of the opposition of England, to take upon herself the execution of the violent measures resolved on in behalf of the execrable Ferdinand of Spain. A speech made at this congress to Chateaubriand, the French plenipotentiary, has been praised by some of the emperor's biographers for its "noble sentiments." To us it seems well worthy of record for its unconscious sophistry and signal display of self-delusion.

"I am very happy," said the emperor to Chateaubriand, "that you came to Verona, because you may now bear witness to the truth. Would you have believed, as our enemies are so fond of asserting, that the alliance is only a word intended



to cover ambition? That might have received a colour of truth under the old order of things, but now all private interests disappear when the civilisation of the world is imperilled. Henceforward there can be no English, French, Russian, Prussian, or Austrian policy; there can only be a general policy, involving the salvation of all, admitted in common by kings and peoples. It is for me, the first of all, to declare my appreciation of the principles on which I founded the Holy Alliance. An opportunity presents itself; it is the Greek insurrection. Certainly no event appeared more adapted to my personal interests, to those of my subjects, and to the feelings and prejudices of the Russians, than a religious war against Turkey; but in the troubles of the Peloponnesus I saw revolutionary symptoms, and from that moment I held aloof. What has not been done to dissolve the alliance? Attempts have been made by turns to excite my cupidity, or to wound my self-love; I have been openly outraged; the world understood me very badly if it supposes that my principles could be shaken by vanities, or could give way before resentment. No, no; I will never separate myself from the monarchs with whom I am united. It should be permitted to kings to form public alliances, to protect themselves against secret associations. What temptations can be offered to me? What need have I to extend my empire? Providence has not placed under my command eight hundred thousand soldiers to satisfy my ambition, but to uphold religion, morality, and justice, and to conserve those principles of order on which society must repose."

This was not the language of "noble sentiment," but of an intellect narrowed by sinister influences, perverted to the views of a most sordid policy, and flattering itself on its own debasement with the maudlin cant of philanthropy.

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## CHAPTER LXIII.

### LAST YEARS AND DEATH OF ALEXANDER.

WE may well conceive that it was not without inward pain and self-reproach that the benevolent Alexander stifled in his heart the voice that rose in favour of the Greeks, and

resisted the wishes of his people, who were animated by a lively sympathy for their co-religionists. That sympathy was manifested as strongly as it could be under this despotic government, where every outward demonstration is interdicted, unless when specially commanded or permitted by authority. They could not see without surprise the head of the so-styled *orthodox* church enduring the outrages of the infidels, and looking on unmoved whilst one of her chief pastors was hung at the porch of his church, and multitudes of her children were massacred. These Greeks had of late been regarded as under the protection of Russia; she was their old ally—nay, more, their accomplice, who had more than once instigated them to break their chains. The supineness of the emperor under such circumstances mortified the nobility, shocked the clergy, and was a subject of sincere affliction to the people, for whom, in their debased condition, religious sentiments held the place of political emotions.

High and low obeyed, however; murmurs were suppressed; but the Russians failed not to attribute to the wrath of God the misfortunes which befel Alexander, amongst which was the malady with which he was afflicted in 1824. It began with erysipelas in the leg, which soon spread upwards, and was accompanied with fever and delirium. For a time his life was in danger, and the people, who sincerely loved him, believed that they saw in this a punishment from on high because he had abandoned an orthodox nation.

Another misfortune was a frightful calamity which befel St. Petersburg in 1824. The mouth of the Neva, opening westward into the Gulf of Finland, is exposed to the violent storms that often accompany the autumnal equinox. They suddenly drive the waters of the gulf into the bed of the river, which then casts forth its accumulated floods upon the low quarters on both its banks. It may be conceived how terrible is the destruction which the unchained waters make in a city built upon a drained marsh, on the eve of a northern winter of seven months' duration. There were terrific inundations in 1728, 1729, 1735, 1740, 1742, and in 1777, a few days before the birth of Alexander; but the worst of all was that which occurred on the 19th of November, 1824, a year before his death. A storm blowing from the west and south-west with extreme violence, forced back the waters of

the Neva, and drove those of the gulf into it. The river rose four measures above the ordinary level, and nearly the whole city was submerged, the water rising nearly to the first story of the houses. Horses and carriages were whirled round on its boiling surface, and sank to rise no more. Many bridges were torn up, wooden houses and barracks were swept away, and an entire regiment of carbineers, who had climbed to the roofs of one of them, perished. The environs were literally razed. At Cronstadt, a ship of the line of 100 guns was left in the middle of the market-place. From eight o'clock in the morning the alarm-guns were fired, and until four in the afternoon the waters continued to rise. The emperor had recently returned from a long journey as far as to the steppes of the Kirghis; now he found himself besieged in his own palace by an invincible enemy. He took his station upon the balcony which looks up the Neva to the north, and there, surrounded by his weeping family, he had the grief to see the river rushing backward to its source, bearing upon its bosom wrecks of every kind, and many small wooden houses, some of them still tenanted by their inhabitants, who were uttering cries for succour which none could render. Bridges and merchandise were floating away; horses and other domestic animals struggling in the torrent; barks sinking under the crowds of human victims who sought refuge in them; and some who had escaped death by drowning, were actually dying of wet and cold, and lay stiffening on the decks of floating vessels, or on loose rafts of wood.

Alexander exerted himself on this dreadful occasion in the full spirit of his better nature. He exposed his life to a thousand dangers in personally directing the means of rescue for all the sufferers who could be reached. After the calamity, he immediately imposed pecuniary sacrifices on himself in order to augment the resources of his charity; and to the honour of the Russians of every description be it told, his example was nobly imitated.\* The number of lives lost was rated in the official report at 4500; but it is probable that the truth would hardly be reached if this number was doubled or trebled. Winter provisions were destroyed, and

\* The subscriptions amounted to more than 160,000*l*. The emperor gave 1,000,000 rubles.

the value of many millions sterling in sugar, cotton, wool, salt, &c., was at once annihilated. Many houses that were not carried away were rendered uninhabitable; and thousands of houseless wretches, without means to warm their chilled limbs, or dry their drenched clothes (for the flood was followed by a cold that sent Réaumur's thermometer down to the 10th degree), were seen wandering through the wreck-strewn streets. Houses of the most solid construction remained impregnated with saline damp, and hung with crystallisations, which proved that it was not the river but the sea which had thus awfully invaded them. The foundations of many were shaken; and if the water had continued for any length of time at the height it had reached, they too must have fallen. To crown this distress, all who suffered from it could not but look forward to future returns of the same disaster. This continual danger hovers like a destroying angel over a population, whose thoughts are nevertheless perpetually diverted from it by the glitter of riches and honour, and who, while death stands thus ever by their side, give themselves up to a life of sensuality and dissipation.

The multitude regarded the catastrophe as a judgment of God. The czar, deeply affected by the sad spectacles he had witnessed, never recovered from the shock. This increased his disgust of life and the heavy melancholy that had of late been growing upon him. The whole aspect of Europe gave fearful tokens that the policy of the Holy Alliance was false and untenable; it was everywhere the subject of execration, and its destruction was the aim of an almost universal conspiracy, extending even into Alexander's own dominions. Poland inspired him with deep alarm, and his native country, notwithstanding her habits of immobility, seemed ripe for convulsions. Thus his public life was filled with disappointment and care, and his private life was deeply clouded with horrors.

The diet of Warsaw had become so refractory, that in 1820 Alexander had found it necessary to suspend it, in violation of the constitution given by himself; and though he opened a new diet in 1824, he did so under such restrictions, that the Poles rightly considered it a mere mockery of representative forms. In the mean time, secret societies which menaced the Russian power had been discovered. The prin-



cial members of them were arrested in 1823, and order seemed for the time re-established. It was, however, merely seeming—a calm on the surface only; the political dictatorship and the military regulations repressed all outward demonstrations; but a continual agitation below the surface foreboded an eruption which could only be prevented by means abhorrent to the benevolent feelings of Alexander.

To add to these troubles, Russia herself was by no means tranquil. In the year 1824 insurrections of the peasants occurred in several governments, and especially in that of Novgorod, in dangerous vicinity to the first-founded of the military colonies. The latter themselves shared the general discontent, and threatened to become a fearful focus of rebellion, as was actually the case in 1832. There existed also in Russia other centres of disaffection, the existence of which might have been long before known to Alexander, but for his culpable habit of allowing petitions to collect in heaps in his cabinet without even breaking their seals. He, however, learned the fact on his last journey into Poland in June, 1825, or immediately after his return.\* He then received the first intimation of the conspiracy which had for many years been plotting against himself and against the existing order of things in Russia—a conspiracy which, as many believe, involved the perpetration of regicide. It is a curious fact, but one by no means unparalleled, that in a country where the police is so active, such a plot should have remained for years undetected. In 1816, several young Russians who had served in the European campaigns of the three preceding years, and who had directed their attention to the secret associations which had so greatly contributed to the liberation of Germany, conceived the idea of establishing similar associations in Russia; and this was the origin of that abortive insurrection which broke out in St. Petersburg on the day when the troops were required to take the oath of allegiance to Alexander's successor.

These details would be sufficient of themselves to account for the melancholy that haunted Alexander in the later years of his reign, and which was painfully manifest in his countenance. But he had to undergo other sufferings.

\* The informer was an inferior officer of Lancers. His name was Sherwood, and he was of English origin.

He was not more than sixteen years of age when his grandmother, Catharine II., had married him to the amiable and beautiful princess Maria of Baden, then scarcely fifteen.\* The match was better assorted than is usually the case in the highest conditions of life, but it was not a happy one. It might have been so if it had been delayed until the young couple were of more mature years, and had not the empress unwisely restricted their freedom after marriage, and spoiled her grandson as a husband by attempting to make him a good one in obedience to her orders. Moreover, the tie of offspring was wanting which might have drawn the parents' hearts together, for two daughters, born in the first two years of their union, died early. Alexander formed other attachments, one of which with the countess Narishkin, lasted eleven years, until it was dissolved by her inconstancy. She had borne him three children; only one was left, a girl as beautiful as her mother, who was now the sole joy of her father's sad heart. But the health of Sophia Narishkin was delicate, and he was compelled to part with her, that she might be removed to a milder climate. She returned too soon, and died on the eve of her marriage, in her eighteenth year. The news was communicated to Alexander one morning when he was reviewing his guard. "I receive the reward of my deeds," were the first words that escaped from his agonised heart.

Elizabeth, whose love had survived long years of neglect, had tears to shed for the daughter of her rival, and none sympathised more deeply than she with the suffering father. He began to see in her what his people had long seen, an angel of goodness and resignation; his affection for her revived, and he strove to wean her from the bitter recollections of the past by his constant and devoted attention. But long-continued sorrows had undermined Elizabeth's health, and her physicians ordered that she should be removed to her native air. She refused, however, to comply with this advice, declaring that the wife of the emperor of Russia should die nowhere else than in his dominions. It was then proposed to try the southern provinces of the empire, and Alexander selected for her residence the little town of Taganrog, on the Sea of Azof, resolving himself to make

\* She took the name of Elizabeth Alexciowna.

all the arrangements for her reception in that remote and little frequented spot. A journey of 1800 versts, after the many other journeys he had already made since the opening of the year, was a fatigue too great for him to sustain without injury, suffering as he still was from erysipelas; but he was accustomed to listen to no advice on the subject of his movements, and two or three thousand versts were nothing in his estimation; besides, on this occasion, in the very fatigue of travelling he sought his repose: he would fulfil a duty which was to appease his conscience. He quitted St. Petersburg in the beginning of September, 1825, preceding the empress by several days. His principal travelling companions were prince Volkhonski, one of the friends of his youth; his aide-de-camp general, baron Diebitsch, a distinguished military man who had been made over to him by the king of Prussia; and his physician, sir James Wylie, who had been about his person for thirty years, and was at the head of the army medical department.

The journey was prosperous, and was accomplished with Alexander's usual rapidity in twelve days, the travellers passing over 150 versts a day; but his mind was oppressed with gloomy forebodings, and these were strengthened by the sight of a comet; for though brought up by a philosophic grandmother, and by a free-thinking tutor, he was by no means exempt from the superstition which is so common amongst the Russians even of the highest classes, in whom the varnish of civilisation covers, without extinguishing, the vulgar prejudices and instinctive sentiments of the uncultivated man; besides, in spite of culture, misfortune renders its victims superstitious, and, as we have seen, Providence had not spared sorrows to the man whose greatness all were ignorantly envying. "Ilya," he called out to his old and faithful coachman, "have you seen the new star? Do you know that a comet always presages misfortune? But God's will be done!" A very favourable change having taken place in the empress's health in Taganrog, Alexander ventured to leave her early in October, for a short excursion through the Crimea. On the 26th of that month Dr. Robert Lee, family physician to count Vorontzof, was one of the emperor's guests at Aloupka. He relates that at dinner Alexander repeatedly expressed how much he was pleased

with Orianda, where he had been that day, and stated that it was his determination to have a palace built there as expeditiously as possible. "To my amazement," says Dr. Lee, "he said after a pause, 'When I give in my demission, I will return and fix myself at Orianda, and wear the costume of the Taurida.' Not a word was uttered when this extraordinary resolution was announced, and I thought that I must have misunderstood the emperor; but this could not be, for in a short time, when count Vorontzof proposed that the large open flat space of ground to the westward of Orianda should be converted into pleasure-grounds for his majesty, he replied: 'I wish this to be purchased for general Diebitsch, as it is right that the chief of my état-major and I should be neighbours.'"

During the latter part of his tour in the Crimea, Alexander had some threatenings of illness, but peremptorily refused all medical treatment. He returned to Taganrog on the 17th of November, with evident symptoms of a severe attack of the bilious remittent fever of the Crimea. He persisted in rejecting medical aid until it was too late, and died on the 1st of December. For a long time the belief prevailed throughout Europe that he had been assassinated; but it is now established beyond question that his death was a natural one. The empress survived him but five months.

Alexander's last days were embittered by fresh disclosures brought to him by general count de Witt, respecting the conspiracy by which, if the official report is to be believed, he was doomed to assassination. From that time he declared himself disgusted with life. Once when sir James Wylie was pressing him to take some medicine, "My friend," said Alexander, "it is the state of my nerves to which you must attend; they are in frightful disorder."—"Alas!" rejoined the physician, "that happens more frequently to kings than to ordinary men."—"Yes," said the emperor, with animation, "but with me in particular there are many special reasons, and at the present hour more so than ever." Some days afterwards, when his brain was almost delirious, the czar gazed intently on the doctor, his whole countenance manifesting intense fear. "Oh, my friend," he exclaimed, "what an act, what a horrible act! The monsters! the ungrateful monsters! I designed nothing but their happiness."



We borrow from Dr. Lée the following just remarks, written, he says, after his arrival in Taganrog, when the general expression of grief for the departed emperor had begun to subside :

“ The people here, and indeed all over the empire, were much attached to their sovereign, on account of his personal good qualities and amiable and conciliating manners. Affability and benevolence he certainly possessed in an eminent degree, and had he not been a great monarch he would have been beloved and respected by all who knew him. But I have met with none here who have endeavoured to form an estimate of his public and political life. I have asked, what has he done for the internal improvement of the country ? but no one has fixed upon any object of importance which will serve to commemorate his reign. Of his conduct in regard to Greece, Italy, and Spain, there can be but one opinion ; and, in respect to Russia, few will hesitate to express their conviction, that his blind attachment to the army, and his dread and hatred of all free institutions in the country, have been two of the greatest errors which a sovereign could have committed. The former passion led to the ruin of the commerce of the country and finances of the empire ; and the latter to the proscription of every species of public instruction, and an obstinate opposition to the introduction of all useful knowledge. The state of the universities is truly wretched ; every man of talent being either driven out or forced to quit them, owing to the restrictions to which they have been subjected. Had one thousandth part of the sums which he expended on the army and navy been devoted to the institution of public schools, to the general welfare of the people, and to the instruction and emancipation of the slaves, civilisation might have been far advanced ; and the danger which must ever exist to a country where so large a proportion of the people are in a state of slavery, greatly diminished, if not completely removed. But everything like freedom was banished from the country, and all was sacrificed to this great army. If, instead of wasting the last ten years in exercising his unwieldy host, in planting military colonies, and in crushing the rising liberties of Germany and the south of Europe, he had directed his mind to the improvement of the laws and

civil institutions of the country, and to the amelioration of the forty millions of slaves in his empire, what a magnificent and imperishable monument would he not have raised to his fame all over the world. As things are, he will not cease to be viewed in all succeeding ages, by political philosophers, as a scourge to his country, and as one who utterly failed in fulfilling the high destinies which Providence at the commencement of his reign appeared to have marked out for him.

“By firmly resisting the invaders of his country, by marching his army into Germany after their retreat, and by his conciliatory manners keeping the sovereigns on the continent in a state of union till the power of their adversary was destroyed, there can be no doubt that he rendered the greatest services to the nations of Europe. But in so far, and no farther, are they indebted to him. The fate of this vast empire no one can certainly foretell; but that changes await it, and at no distant period, who can doubt? The army is rotten at the core. Many of the officers detest the present system of government, and desire a representative and constitutional government, and long to see the slaves educated and gradually emancipated. The soldiers cannot feel any attachment to the government which has dragged them from their homes and doomed them to a life of the severest hardship. Slight circumstances might effect the most important changes in the whole structure of society in Russia, and it is hardly possible that good should not spring from any change. All power being vested in the army, the changes will begin first in that quarter, and will propagate themselves into all the ranks of the empire. Again, I say, that no one regrets the emperor Alexander as a public loss; and I feel certain that out of Russia few tears will be shed on this occasion, except by those wretched despots whom he has assisted by upholding them in their unlimited and unlawful power. Even at Taganrog, where his body now lies, where his empress is still present in a state of deep mourning for his loss, and where all the trappings of woe are exhibited, the tears of the people have already ceased to flow, and the thoughts of all are directed with the deepest anxiety to the line of conduct which his successor, Constantine, will follow. The emperor Alexander undoubtedly gained the affection of

those immediately around his person, because he was most attentive to their feelings and wants, and by them he is no doubt sincerely regretted; but of his tender mercies to the people at large I can see no evidence. Where were his sympathies at the congresses of Troppau, Laybach, and Verona, for the people, whose national independence he violated? How did his compassion show itself when inflicting so much misery on those whom he had torn from their families to fill up the ranks of his useless and almost countless legions? What regard to the feelings of those crown slaves whom he had planted in his military colonies?"

Miserable indeed were the results of a reign which in its opening had promised to regenerate Russia. All is explained by that fatal infirmity of will and want of practical sense, the result in all probability of Catharine's too rigorous tutelage, which made Alexander the dupe of his imagination or of other men. Subjected in his youth to a domestic discipline almost as strict as that in which women are reared, his mind remained womanly to the last in its need of dependence and guidance. His character, says one who had studied the man,\* "offered only a radiant surface, of softened lustre it is true, but in which weakness was more conspicuous than strength, and over which borrowed ideas successively glided, and systems with no necessary connexion between them."

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## CHAPTER LXIV.

INTERREGNUM — CONSTANTINE'S RENUNCIATION OF THE THRONE—ACCESSION OF NICHOLAS I.—MILITARY REVOLT.

By virtue of the law of succession enacted by Paul in 1797, and confirmed by Alexander in 1807, the vacant crown of Russia devolved of right upon Constantine, the eldest of the three surviving imperial brothers. Immediately after the news of Alexander's death was received in St. Petersburg, the grand-duke Nicholas presented himself to the senate to take the oath of allegiance to his brother; yet he could not but have been aware of the existence and purport

\* Alph. Rabbe, "*Histoire d'Alexandre I.*," t. i. p. 4.

of a sealed document which Alexander had deposited with the council, and on which was written in his own hand, "To be kept by the council of the empire until I order otherwise. In the event of my death, this packet to be opened at an extraordinary sitting before proceeding to any other business." The president of the council, prince Peter Vassilievitch Lapukin, broke the seal, and found enclosed a manifesto, signed by Alexander, and dated at Tzarskoeselo the 16th (28th) of August, 1823, together with two other deeds, dated eighteen months earlier. One of these was a letter from Constantine to the emperor Alexander, dated St. Petersburg, the 14th (26th) of January, 1822, and containing the following remarkable passage :

"Conscious that I do not possess either the genius, the talents, or the strength necessary to fit me for the dignity of sovereign, to which my birth would give me a right, I entreat your imperial majesty to transfer that right to him to whom it belongs after me, and thus ensure for ever the stability of the empire. As to myself, I shall add by this renunciation a new guarantee and a new force to the engagement which I spontaneously and solemnly contracted on the occasion of my divorce from my first wife. All the circumstances in which I find myself strengthen my determination to adhere to this resolution, which will prove to the empire and to the whole world the sincerity of my sentiments."

The second enclosure was a letter from Alexander, in answer to that of Constantine—a simple acceptance of his resignation. The manifesto above mentioned was in substance as follows :

"I. The spontaneous act by which our younger brother, the czarévitch and grand-duke Constantine, renounces his right to the throne of all the Russias, is, and remains, fixed and irrevocable. The said act of renunciation will be preserved in the great cathedral of the Assumption at Moscow, and in the three administrations of our empire, the holy synod, the council of the empire, and the directing senate, in order to ensure its safety and publicity.

"II. In consequence of this arrangement, and in conformity with the strict tenor of the act of succession to the throne, we acknowledge our second brother, the grand-duke Nicholas, as our heir."



It appears certain, we repeat, that Nicholas was aware of all these particulars when he proclaimed his brother as emperor. The council waited upon him, and prepared to pay him homage, according to the words of the manifesto; but he would not allow it to proceed. "I am not emperor," he said, "and wish not to become so to the detriment of my elder brother. If the grand-duke Constantine maintains his renunciation, if he persists in making this sacrifice of his rights, in that case, and in that only, I will exercise mine by accepting the throne." The council, on other occasions so timidly acquiescent, would not yield now; but urged the great danger to which his refusal might subject the country; for in an autocratic state it may be truly said that an interregnum is a revolution. The grand-duke, nevertheless, remained immovable, alleging that the renunciation not having been proclaimed during the preceding reign, was invalid, that Constantine was consequently emperor, and that it might not please him now to give his sanction to an act which, without it, was null and void. His decision must, therefore, be awaited, and all must be done in the mean time as if the resignation had never been made. Silenced, but not satisfied, the members of the council replied to Nicholas: "You are our emperor—we owe you absolute obedience; if you order us to recognise the grand-duke Constantine as our legitimate sovereign, it only remains for us to conform to your commands." Accordingly, the oath was immediately enforced in Constantine's name, though at that moment the death of Alexander had hardly been made known to the public. So great was the haste employed, that the usual proclamation of such an event was dispensed with.

What were the motives that prompted Nicholas to pursue this very extraordinary course? His own explanation of them is unsatisfactory. "We had not," he declared in the manifesto, on his accession, "the wish or the right to consider as irrevocable a renunciation which, although made, was never proclaimed or passed into a law. We wished to show our respect for the fundamental regulations of our country respecting the order of succession to the throne. . . . Our object was to guard against any infringement of that law which establishes the order of succession, to manifest the loyalty of our intentions, and *to save our*

*beloved country from even a moment's uncertainty as to the person of her legitimate sovereign. (!)* This determination, taken in the purity of our conscience before God, who sees into the inmost recesses of the heart, was blessed by our beloved mother, the empress Marie." Others have asserted that Nicholas was mainly influenced by his knowledge of the fact that he was not popular at that date, either with the public or the army, whose affections he had alienated by his severity and his petty vexations; that he imagined Constantine would repent of having rejected one of the first crowns in the world; and that in the event of a conflict, it would not be to himself that the preference would be accorded. He foresaw, too, it is said, that his inexperience would further diminish his chance of success. Aware as he doubtless was of the plot to which Alexander had been in danger of falling the first victim, Nicholas, it has been surmised, durst not assume his rights, with the risk of finding at so critical a moment an enemy in his own brother.

We must pause a moment to explain the manner in which Constantine's renunciation of his hereditary rights had been brought about. Like his elder brother, he had, in obedience to his grandmother's commands, contracted a marriage too early in life. The bride to whom he was united, in the year 1796, was the princess Julienne of Saxe Coburg, sister of Leopold I., the present king of the Belgians. No children were born from the marriage, which was by no means a happy one, and the young pair separated by mutual consent at the expiration of four years. Twenty years afterwards, Constantine became acquainted with Jane Grudzinska, daughter of a Polish count, a young lady gifted with rich endowments of mind and heart, under whose influence he became a most remarkable example of romantic attachment. Of all Paul's sons, Constantine was the only one that resembled him, either in features or in character. He even surpassed his father in ugliness. As to his character, "he is the worthy son of his father," wrote Masson, towards the close of the last century; "he exhibits the same eccentricities, the same passions, the same turbulence; he will never have his information or his general ability, but he promises fair to equal, nay, even to surpass him one day in the art of setting automaton in motion." Eccentric, impetuous, passionate, even brutal, Con-

stantine, nevertheless, hid some of the qualities of a noble heart under a repulsive exterior. Coarseness and harshness of speech are not infallible proofs of want of feeling; temper or affectation is frequently the source from which they flow.\* He always manifested great respect for the memory of his unfortunate father; and towards his mother he exhibited affection, deference, and submission. He adored his brother Alexander. That he was not without humanity was seen in his treatment of the sick and wounded of the French army who fell into the power of the Russians in 1812. Officers and privates were alike the objects of his lively solicitude; he visited them in the hospitals, sent them relief, administered words of consolation, and conferred appointments in his palace of Thelna, on the Gulf of Finland, upon several whom he chose from amongst them.

But if Constantine had good qualities, he took care that few should suspect their existence. Women disliked him, and men approached him only with fear and trembling; and yet he won the love of Jane Grudzinska, and returned it with chivalric devotion.

The laws of the Greek church are in general rigid with regard to divorce, and it is very unusual to permit a second marriage of either party during the life of the other; but in ecclesiastical matters, as in all others, the will of the autocrat allows of no opposition. An imperial ukase, dated 1st April, 1820, declared the grand-duke's first marriage dissolved, and himself in a position to contract a second. On the 5th of June he solemnly, though as it is called with the left hand, married Jane Grudzinska, on whom the emperor conferred the title of princess of Lowicz.

The children of this marriage, had there been any, would not have been born grand-dukes of Russia, nor would they have been entitled to ascend the throne. It is probable that Constantine gave his elder brother an undertaking that he would abide by the existing law in that respect, and that he alludes to that undertaking in his act of renunciation of 1822, when he speaks of adding *a new guarantee and a new force to the engagement which he spontaneously and solemnly contracted*

\* "The act of ferocity imputed by Custine to the czarevitch (t. iii. p. 212) is evidently borrowed from a distant age. Such an act could not have been done in our days even in Poland."—*Schnitzler*.

on the occasion of his divorce from his first wife. Want of capacity to govern, the reason alleged by Constantine for renouncing the throne, was certainly not his real motive; nor was it to this that Alexander replied when he wrote: "I find in your letter nothing to surprise me; it furnishes only a new proof of your sincere attachment to the state, and of your solicitude for its undisturbed repose." The key to this political mystery is to be found in the facts, that the princess Lowicz was in the first place a Pole; and, secondly, notwithstanding her marriage, she was still a catholic, whilst the wife of the czar could not legally profess any but the *true orthodox faith*.

Placed, though subordinately, beside the throne, the wife of Constantine, had she chosen to accept such a position, must still have wounded the prejudices of a sensitive people, and in a manner outraged an article of their faith. She must either have lived at court in entire obscurity and oblivion, or appearing at all, must have taken rank after the grand-duchesses. This inferiority could not but wound the pride of her husband, whose susceptibility would be quickened by his strong affection. Was it to be supposed that he would long endure it? Again, her position, mortifying though it would have been, would have placed a Pole and a subject above all the women of Russia not of the imperial family, among the most illustrious princesses of the blood of Rurik or Ghedemir. Would the Muscovite pride have suffered this? Would even her virtues have obliterated from Russian recollection the memory of Marina Mniszech? Jane Grudzinska was a woman of spirit and of cultivated mind, attached to her country and her religion. It was to be apprehended that she would claim further privileges for Poland, whilst the Russians held that the vassal kingdom already enjoyed too many, and were exceedingly jealous because it possessed some rights not extended to themselves. Another embarrassment was found in the fact, that though incompetent to sit on the throne of Rurik and of Vladimir Monomachus, she was not excluded from that of the Piasts. Her blood was as good as that of many former queens of her nation; private gentlemen had been seen sometimes to ascend that elective throne; and when raised to that elevation, the king ceased not to be *primus inter pares*. The two



crowns had indeed been declared indissoluble on the head of the princes of the house of Holstein-Romanof; but the sovereign, without violating the laws of Russia, might use the latitude accorded to him in the vassal kingdom in the choice of his queen, and thus gratify his private affection or his desire of popularity.

It would appear that Alexander and his mother were swayed by these grave considerations when they obtained from Constantine more than could be exacted by the existing law. It is not improbable that he was little inclined to ascend the throne. He, who bore so very striking a resemblance to his father, could not forget the bloody catastrophe which had terminated his days. More than this, under the influence of love, he, like the happy, troubled himself but little with thoughts of the future. His strong attachment to Poland caused him to regard it as his adopted country; since his Polish marriage his ties to Russia had been weakened; and it was easy for him to renounce the land of his birth, provided only that Poland remained to him. Under these circumstances, and with these feelings, he did all that was required of him, and did it with a good grace.\*

The news of Alexander's death was received at Warsaw thirty-six hours earlier than at St. Petersburg. Constantine immediately wrote, and despatched by the hands of his younger brother, Michael, a formal confirmation of the act of 1822. Even this was not enough for Nicholas; and Michael was requested to return to Warsaw, inform Constantine that the oath of allegiance had been taken to him, and obtain from him a declaration of his will under such circumstances. Meanwhile, no proclamation was made in St. Petersburg. The grand-duke Michael did not pursue his journey further than to Dorpat, in Livonia. There he met the confidential mes-

\* Schnitzler, "Secret History," &c., vol. i. p. 178.—Far from ever regretting the act by which he sacrificed the throne of Russia for love, it is stated on authority, that, shortly before his sudden death, Constantine entertained the idea of carrying his devotion still further, retiring into private life as soon as he should have completed his forty years' service, and fixing his residence at Frankfort-on-the-Maine. The princess Lowicz died at St. Petersburg on the 29th of November, 1830, a few months after her husband. The woman who could soften, and almost transform a character so ferocious and imperious as that of Constantine, must have been herself truly amiable.

senger of Constantine, and having learned from his lips that the resolution of the czarevitch was unchangeable, he turned back, and arrived just in time to act his part in the momentous drama of which the capital now became the theatre.

On the 24th of December the grand-duke Nicholas at last consented to accept the crown. The interregnum had lasted three weeks, and that was a long time under the critical circumstances in which Russia was then placed. Despatches from Taganrog had by this time made known to the government the machinations discovered in the south, and the order given by general Diebitsch, on his own responsibility, to arrest colonel Pestel, the soul of the plot in the army, with several other conspirators. It was thought probable that an insurrection would break out in Little Russia; but in the capital itself no immediate danger was apprehended until on the night of the 25th the emperor received a letter from sub-lieutenant Rostoftsof, informing him that the plot was ripe, and the guards had been for two days wavering. In consequence of this information, it was resolved not to summon the guards to assemble publicly on the 26th; but that the oath should be administered early in the morning in the barracks of each regiment. Government did not wait even till the manifesto could be published. This precipitation was both impolitic and culpable; for the surprise by which many well-intentioned but ignorant men were thus overtaken, and the seeming recklessness with which one oath newly administered was thrown aside to make way for another, could not but produce an amount of uncertainty and confusion favourable to the designs of the conspirators. A more prudent step was that of changing the palace guard during the night. The life grenadiers, against whom heavy suspicions existed, were withdrawn, and their places taken by a detachment of the Finnish regiment and the sappers of the guard. The palace resembled a citadel, and the precautions taken were not superfluous, for the danger was greater than it had been supposed. The conspirators were apprised that they had been denounced by Rostoftsof, and they unanimously echoed the cry of one among them, "Our scabbards are broken; we can no longer hide our sabres." It is true that they were not ready for action at the moment; but the fact of the throne being vacant, and the prolonged uncertainty as to

the person of the sovereign, seemed to offer them an opportunity too promising to be neglected. They did not number in their ranks many men of large fortune; for the Russians are nice calculators, and the rich were little disposed to enter into a plot of doubtful success, which, failing, might ruin them, or, successful, might cause a revolution with regard to property; but many younger members of powerful families were implicated, and persons of standing had promised their support, though as yet they had taken no leading part in the plot. Many officers, some of whom were of high rank and name, had also promised their concurrence. These officers were thickly scattered in the regiments of the imperial guard, and above all in the marine force depending on it; they were found also in the grenadiers in the regiment of Moscow, and in that of Ismailof, of which the grand-duke Nicholas had been colonel. The revolt once openly begun, who could say how far it might extend?

The short interval previous to the time of action was spent by several officers in urging the soldiers not to perjure themselves by taking an oath annulling that which they had sworn to Constantine. One is touched with pity at the thought of the uncertainty, and the complete moral darkness in which the conscientious soul of the Russian soldier was left by his chiefs. Some of them, partisans of Nicholas, did not deign to make him acquainted with the change of situation; others, the conspirators, not being able to make him understand their ideas of liberty, misled him with the belief that Constantine, to whom he had just sworn fidelity, was the true czar—and that he was on his march to punish those who should go over to Nicholas. Filled with fears and scruples, the poor fellows for the most part remained inert and immovable. Some few of them, upon hearing the discharges of musketry, and learning that their comrades were being massacred, were drawn by mere generous sympathy to stand by them. The conspirators only succeeded in drawing over to them the regiment of Moscow, the corps of marine guards, and half the battalion of the grenadier guards, in all about three thousand men.

This small force marched to the immense square, or rather plain, of St. Isaac, and posted themselves behind the statue of Peter the Great. There were a great number of conspi-

rators, not of the military, but yet armed to the teeth, besides a numerous concourse of spectators and a dense body of people, and yet they looked as if lost in the vast snow-covered space. All anxiously looked forward for the arrival of the two military leaders of the insurrection, Trubetskoi and Bulatof, but neither of them appeared. Bulatof remained the whole day in the immediate escort of the emperor and near his person; either because he was still undecided, or, as he afterwards boasted, because he remained there for the purpose of killing him, the moment that he should betray the least symptom of weakness. As for Trubetskoi, he abandoned all, both the command of the insurrection, and the care of his papers, which afterwards caused the destruction of so many lives, and fled, first to the house of his mother-in-law, then to that of the Austrian ambassador, and finally to the emperor himself surrounded by his staff—just as a frightened hare seeks to hide itself in the midst of the hounds.

Ryleief, the civil head of the insurrection, displayed much greater firmness than the military chiefs. He came upon the square, and sought them in vain; the diminished number of the insurgents left little to hope for. Some advised him to improvise an army, by attaching to the insurrection the masses of the lower orders who had assembled there; and this he might have done merely by delivering over to them the brandy stores. Having forced these, the mujiks would have immediately proceeded to a general pillage, and to a massacre of the police, who so horribly flog them, and to whom they bear so deadly a hatred. The mujiks (populace) number in the capital 75,000 men, either unmarried or whose wives are left in the provinces.\* Habitually under the rod of the police, and subjected to a discipline unknown to the rest of the people, they brood in silence over their wrongs, which in some hour of popular frenzy may tempt them to terrific vengeance. "When the wretched Russians break their chains," says Schiller, "it will not be before the freemen, but before the slave, that the community must tremble." A riot on the part of the mujiks would have produced a considerable diversion in favour of the conspirators, as Nicholas would

\* At St. Petersburg the women form only two-sevenths of the entire population: an alarming fact.



have been compelled to detach a party of his troops to act against the former. Ryleief, however, refused to employ this dreadful means. From that moment it was easy to foresee the event. The insurrection, hemmed in before the palace of the senate, at the extremity of an immense square, must infallibly be swept away by grape shot, and sabred by the cavalry. Ryleief left the square; he sought no place of safety, but returned to his house, and calmly awaited death.

The emperor, says an eye-witness, pale and haggard, nevertheless displayed much courage. He advanced into the plain, at the head of his horse-guards, and came upon the detachments which were proceeding to join the insurgents. "Good day, my children!" said he, according to the custom of the czars. "Hurrah! Constantine!" was their only answer. It seems undisputed that he appeared quite resolved, and was not in the least disconcerted. What he said has never been positively known. Two versions have been put forward, one by M. Schnitzler, who was present at the time; the other by M. de Custine, to whom the emperor himself related the affair. The most truthful of the two seems to be, that he cried with a loud voice, "To the right wheel—march!" and that the soldiers mechanically obeyed.

The day, very short in December, was passing away, and the insurgents waited in vain for the arrival of their colonels. Their number gradually diminished. Part of the Moscow regiment repented, and left them; but those that remained were still firm. Instead of being alarmed at the artillery, which had followed the emperor, and which was about to thunder upon them, they rejected every word of conciliation, crying, "Long live Constantine! the constitution for ever!" This last word, instead of encouraging their partisans, as they expected, threw the soldiers into uncertainty. "What is this *Constitutzia*? Is it the wife of the emperor?" they asked. Nicholas, on his side, had 13,000 troops to oppose the small body of the insurgents. The first officer who led his troops into St. Isaac's-square to support the imperial cause was colonel (now count) Alexis Orlof, whose brother, general Michael Orlof, was slightly implicated in the conspiracy of the south. The speed with which Orlof brought up

his men for his master's service has never been forgotten by him.\*

The governor of St. Petersburg, the brave Miloradovitch, who had succeeded in detaching some of the insurgents, and confining them in the citadel, was bold enough to approach, relying on the former attachment of the soldiers. "Traitor!" cried the conspirators, "thou art not here behind the scenes of a theatre" (he was a great admirer of actresses). "What hast thou done with our comrades?" Obolenski stabbed the general's horse with his bayonet, and Kakhofski mortally wounded with a pistol-shot the Murat of Russia, as Ségur calls the veteran, who had passed unscathed through fifty-six battles with foreign enemies. Kakhofski, who was greatly excited, and was bent upon killing the emperor, thought himself resolute enough for the project; but having mortally wounded Miloradovitch, and shot dead colonel Sturler, his heart gave way. "Yet another life upon my conscience!" he exclaimed, and immediately threw away his weapon.

The archbishops of St. Petersburg and of Kief, who had been sent by the emperor, advanced towards the insurgents with great pomp, bearing the cross. It may here be remarked how very little the Russian, with all his external devotion, is really impressed with the objects of his worship in circumstances of a grave nature; what little attention he pays to the priests, whose lives are certainly anything but edifying. The prelates were received by the soldiers with hootings, and their voices were drowned in the rolling of the drums.

This was what was expected and desired. Having God upon his side, the emperor ordered the horse-guards and the chevalier guards to charge. The insurgents made a brave but hopeless resistance. None of them showed any signs of wavering; night was drawing near, and it was found necessary to make an end of the affair with the artillery. The grand-duke Michael, fearing that the soldiers might feel some compunction at firing upon their poor countrymen,

\* The present count Orlof is not, as commonly supposed, the son of either of Catharine's two celebrated Orlofs, Gregory or Alexis, but of the fourth brother, Feodor, through whom alone the family name has been continued.

was the first to set the example. Fired from but little distance, the grape-shot did fearful execution, tearing and scattering limbs about in all directions. Ten successive volleys were fired, and then all the insurgents who remained dispersed themselves, pursued by the cavalry, a detachment of which cut off their retreat. No one knows the number that perished. Holes were made in the thick ice, which then covered the Neva, and into them were thrown the corpses of the victims. Well might Nicholas exclaim, as he rejoined the empress on the evening of that woeful day, "What a beginning of a reign!"

The conspirators of the south did not share a better fate. One of the Bestujefs, and the brothers Muravief, who were all brave and enthusiastic, were not dismayed by the apathy which characterised the majority of their associates. They addressed themselves to the soldiers, and ordered a priest to read to them, from the pulpit, a republican catechism arranged by Bestujef, and composed of texts drawn from the Bible. They were told that all men were equal, and that slavery was a crime against Heaven; but these maxims produced little effect upon them; they were only excited by the name of Constantine.\* The partisans of Nicholas, who were the more numerous, having on their side the imperial artillery, soon overcame them; but these valiant chiefs either killed themselves on the spot, or sought their death in the fight. Bestujef and Muravief were not taken before they were dangerously wounded.

Pestel, who was seized at Moscow, displayed no emotion. Being warned of his danger by a friend, he uttered but these words, "Only save my Russian Code." This book, which had been buried in the earth, was found and delivered over to the commissioners of inquiry, who endeavoured, in their proceedings, to render it ridiculous. It is, however,

\* Sergius Muravief called upon a company of grenadiers to shout with him, "The Republic for ever!" They ransacked their brains in vain to get at the meaning of that unheard-of cry. At last an old grenadier, leaning on his musket, ventured to come to an explanation with his colonel. "We will shout '*A Republic for ever!*' if it so please your grace;" said he; "but who after all is to be czar?" "There is none in a republic." "Oh, in that case, your grace, it will not do for Russia!" The whole company was of the same opinion.

certain, that the authors of the Code of Nicholas have been obliged to adopt several of Pestel's views, and assuredly the political part of his book contains several wise and humane ideas, viz., the moderate relaxation of the horrid iron band which crushes Russia, in substituting for it a natural and mild government analogous to the American confederation, the reparation of a crying injustice, fatal to the Russian empire, by the integral re-establishment of Poland; and the according of vast privileges to the Jews, which would have been a means of healing some of the wounds of Poland, by enabling it to found a province in the East.

Here then were Pestel, Ryleief, the valiant and amiable Alexander Bestujef, the intrepid Muravief, the genius, the virtue, the courage, the very heart of Russia, all thrown into the dungeons of St. Petersburg. Pushkin, the great national poet, and one of the conspirators, was alone wanting. Residing at some distance from the capital, he was on his way thither to fight and die with the rest, when, in the midst of his journey, he met a hare; his coachman stopped. This is considered a bad omen by every Russian; but Pushkin still went on. He next met an old woman. Here there was a fresh stoppage; the coachman refused to proceed. At length coming upon a priest, the worst sign of all, his coachman left his seat, and throwing himself upon his knees, revealed to his master his superstitious terror. The poet returned, and was saved for the time, but was reserved for greater misfortunes, and a more tragic end.

The terrible manifesto published by the emperor the day following, was said to be written by the friend of the old empress, the historian of the Ivans, the patriarch of the school of terror—Karamzin.

A minute inquiry was instituted at St. Petersburg, the grand-duke Michael was one of the commissioners, and Nicholas himself took part in the examinations. Vast numbers were arrested on the slightest suspicion; their papers were diligently examined, and if no overt acts could be found against them, words, which might have been spoken ten years before, were laid hold of, though perhaps scarcely remembered either by those who were accused of them, or those who professed to have heard them. Even supposing that calumny had not induced some of the impeached to



make false declarations, fear may have led them to charge others, in order to extenuate their own faults; words were wrested from their true acceptance; comments made upon them, and, considering *the serious nature of the facts*, recourse was had to *extraordinary measures*; persuasion was employed in some instances, and in others intimidation. Several of the unfortunate victims were loaded with chains; some were made to confess inaccurate facts, others to sign pure fictions; and both times and events were confounded.

"Fear," says a Russian proverb, "has large eyes;" and the commission of inquiry converted facts of small importance into a monstrous affair, while it at the same time endeavoured to ruin the conspirators in the public opinion. It attacked their personal dignity, called their courage in question, loaded them with the grossest epithets, ridiculed their political views as *vulgar philanthropy* or *scoundrel schemes*; and sure of not being belied, it attributed to many of them the most miserable recantations. No doubt, a number, especially of the military conspirators, Russians of the old school, accustomed from their infancy to deify the emperor, returned sincerely to their former idolatry, and considered the events of the 14th December as a judgment of God; but with regard to the greater number, may we not reasonably suppose, that such partial judges only sought, by these accusations, to bring dishonour on their names? What makes this still more probable is, that the inquiry, so laboriously carried on, contains facts which are acknowledged false by all parties—false dates, for example. It takes for granted, that at the very formation of these associations, in 1817, at the time when Alexander was still beloved by his people, and consulted by the conspirators themselves, they contemplated regicide as the first inevitable step towards the realisation of their plans.

A cursory examination of the act of accusation will show at a glance the contradictions and nonsense with which it abounded, and the total absence of all proof. Defence was out of the question; the conspirators were impeached by prejudiced accusers, sentenced by servile judges, and were without the benefit of counsel. For instance, Jakushkin had offered to assassinate the emperor with his own hand.—When?—In 1817! But he yielded to the arguments of

Von-Viesen and Sergius Muravief. At a meeting, held at Kief in 1823, a motion to exterminate the imperial family could not be carried; according to the act of indictment itself, Sergius Muravief declared that he would not consent to regicide. Bestujef-Rumini maintained the same opinion in a letter to Juschinski. As for the letter which he was accused of having addressed to the Secret Society of Poland, and in which he was said to have demanded the death of Constantine, it was never despatched. It was said that it was intended to seize the person of the czar at Bobruisk; who can prove that the means were wanting and not the will? Jukof exclaimed, that if the lot fell on him to assassinate the emperor, he would kill himself. Nikita Muravief desired only the propaganda: and declared the plan of exterminating the imperial family to be barbarous and impracticable.

Matthew Muravief, in a letter of the 3rd of November, 1824, to his brother Sergius, demonstrated the impossibility of any revolutionary convulsion. Yakobovitch, it was said, wished to revenge himself on Alexander and to kill him; but he denied the accusation, and the commission ascertained that the other members of the society endeavoured to hinder the execution of this menace, which was nothing more than bravado. With respect to the assassination of Nicholas, the commission itself ascribed to Yakobovitch the following words: "I will not undertake it; I have an honest heart, and cannot become an assassin in cold blood." Bestujef having, as it was said, expressed an opinion that they could *penetrate into the palace*, Batinkof exclaimed, "God forbid!" If we may give credit to the report of the commission, Kakhofski imputed to Ryleief the intention to murder Constantine, but Bestujef and Steinheil denied this charge.

"What had your emperor done to you?" said Nicholas to one of the conspirators, when he did them the honour to examine them himself. "We had not an emperor," was the reply; "we have had two; one was your brother, and the other Araktcheief;" and as he continued in this strain, the grand-duke Michael, who was present, exclaimed, "That man should have his mouth stopped with a bayonet." "You asked just now," said the prisoner, "why we wanted a constitution; it was that such things might not be said."

To Michael Bestujef Nicholas said, "I might pardon you; and if I felt sure of possessing henceforth in you a faithful subject, I would do so." "Why, sire," replied Bestujef, "that is precisely what we complain of,—that the emperor can do anything, and that he is bound by no law. In the name of God, allow justice to have free course, and let the fate of your subjects no longer depend on your caprice, or your momentary impressions."

Count Tchernitchef was among the prisoners. "Is it possible," said the emperor, addressing him, "that you should rest under a stain of the deepest guilt and infamy! you who belong to one of the best families in my empire? I hope not. Disavow the principles you have professed; tell me you repent the mad acts you have committed, and I will grant you a pardon." Tchernitchef refused. "I have acted according to my conscience," was his sole reply.

We may believe the report of the commission of inquiry when, and only when, it says anything at all favourable to the accused. Now this is what it says of the regulations of the principal secret society, that of *the Public Good*:

"The principal provisions of the *Code du Bien Public*, the division of subjects, the most remarkable ideas, and even to the very style, show an imitation and in great part a translation from the German. The authors declare, in the name of the founders of the association, that the good of the country is their sole object—that this object can have nothing contrary to the views of government; that government stood in need of the concurrence of individuals; that the society which they organised would be to it an auxiliary for effecting good; and that without concealing their intentions from citizens worthy of participating in them, they would pursue their labours in secret, solely to avoid the misrepresentations of hatred and malevolence. The members were divided into four *sections* or *branches*. Each member was to inscribe himself in one of these sections, without, however, refusing to take any part in the labours of the others. The first section had for its object *philanthropy*, or the advancement of public and private benevolence. Its duty was to watch over all charitable institutions, and to point out to the directors of such establishments, and also to government itself, the abuses which might creep in, and the means for remedying them. The

object of the second section was intellectual and moral education, the extension of enlightenment, the foundation of schools, especially on the Lancasterian system, and generally a useful co-operation for the instruction of youth, by virtuous examples, by discourses and writings analogous to such views, as also to the ends of society. To the members of this second section the superintendence of all schools was confided. They were to inspire youth with the love of everything national, and to oppose as much as possible the notion of educating them abroad and all foreign influence. The third section was required to give especial attention to the proceedings of the tribunals. Its members engaged not to decline any judicial functions which might be offered to them by the choice of the nobility or by the government; to fulfil such functions with zeal and precision; to observe carefully the progress of affairs of this nature; to encourage upright *employés*, even by granting them pecuniary aid; to strengthen in good principles those who might betray any weakness; to enlighten those who were deficient in information; to denounce prevaricating functionaries, and to apprise government of their conduct. Finally, the members of the fourth section were to devote themselves to the study of political economy; to attempt the discovery and the definition of the immovable principles of national wealth; to contribute to the development of all branches of industry; to strengthen public credit; and oppose monopolies."

After more than five months' investigation, the commission of inquiry completed its labours. The emperor appointed a supreme tribunal, composed of the council of the empire, the synod and the senate, to decide on the fate of the accused. To these three public bodies several military and civil officers of high rank were added. This tribunal decided that, according to law, all the prisoners, one hundred and twenty in number, deserved death; but it appealed to the imperial clemency, and classed the criminals under eleven heads, making an exception of five of them, whom it set apart, on account of the enormity of their crime. These were Pestel, Ryleief, Sergius Muravief, Bestujef-Rumini, and Kakhofski, who were condemned to be quartered. Thirty-one individuals of the first category were sentenced to be beheaded; those of the second to incur political death; those



of the third to undergo hard labour for life; those of the fourth to serve as private soldiers, retaining the rights of nobility, &c. &c.

The emperor granted a commutation of these punishments. The five individuals condemned to be quartered were sentenced to be hanged: thus an indignity was put upon them even in the kind of death which they were to suffer. Those of the first category were condemned to hard labour for life in Siberia; and the punishment of the remainder was mitigated in proportion; but all were doomed to the most dreadful exile and slavery.

On the 13th (25th) July the execution took place on the *glacis* of the citadel. The condemned were compelled to look on for a whole hour while the preparations were going on for their execution; and their less wretched companions were forced to march round the gibbets; their swords were broken over their heads, and their epaulettes and military decorations thrown into the fire. The ropes to which Ryleief, Muravief, and Bestujef-Rumini were suspended unhappily broke, and these men were led to death a second time.\* Orders were given to erect gibbets instead of crosses on the graves of the officers killed at Ustinofka.

On the following day the square in front of the senate-house, where the revolt had taken place, was purified by a religious and expiatory ceremony. The emperor sent one of his aide-de-camps to the widow of Ryleief to assure her of his protection; but the noble woman replied, "The only favour I ask of the emperor is to have me shot like my husband;" for she still believed that to have been the form of his punishment. Nicholas presented 50,000 rubles to Pestel's father, and to his brother he gave the epaulettes of an aide-de-camp in his service, which gave rise to the saying, that he wore the rope with which his brother had been hanged. Rostoftsof's fortune was made; and Sherwood, the informer, received 50,000 rubles, a house, and the title of Faithful, which, however, did not save him from being subsequently expelled from his regiment for misconduct.

A manifesto of his majesty of the 13th (25th) of July in-

\* "In this cursed country," said Muravief, "they don't even know how to hang a man!" "Decidedly nothing succeeds with me, not even death," were the last words of Ryleief.

formed the world that he had seen with pleasure "the nearest relations denounce and give up to justice the wretches who were suspected of being accomplices." Russian servility could descend even to that depth of infamy; but noble examples were not wanting. The princesses Trubetskoi and Sergius Volkhonski, and Mesdames Alexander Muravief, Nicetas Muravief, and Naryshkin, voluntarily shared their husbands' exile, well knowing to what a life of squalid hardship and wretchedness they doomed themselves, and that their unborn children would be slaves. So joyfully did these noble women sacrifice themselves, that a foreigner heard one of them utter this strange threat to her daughter: "Sophia, if you are not good, you shall not go to Siberia!" Nicholas graciously allowed these heroic wives to go to that land of horrors, and has let them remain there to this day.

The soldiers who had taken part in the insurrection were sent to Georgia, and in the war which broke out soon afterwards, they were employed in the first line against the Persians. The regiments which had remained loyal received rewards: to one of them was given the uniform of Alexander; to others, his initials; and to the Don Cossacks, his sword.

Fortunately, says Golovin, we need not go far to look for a criticism on all these proceedings. Facts, analogous to those we have related, had just taken place in a neighbouring country, tributary to Russia, but enjoying a more enlightened administration. They had results which unanswerably condemned the arbitrary proceedings of despotism, and proved, incontestibly, the superiority of a constitutional government. The inquiry, instituted at St. Petersburg, showed that there were in Poland secret societies which had even been connected with the Southern Society. The attention of the government was naturally turned to them, and an investigation was ordered to be made at Warsaw. It was ascertained, in fact, that ever since 1821, there had existed in Poland the *National Patriotic Society*; and that, in the following year, Mazefsky had organised the *Society of the Templars*, on the model of that of Scotland. Uminski, Jablonowski, Soltyk, Krzyzanowski, were members of these societies, the principal object of which was the restoration of Poland. The commission of inquiry classed the accused under five categories, and the senate was charged to decide on their fate. It appointed

advocates as counsel for the prisoners; the proceedings were public, and lasted a month; after which the supreme court ordered a new act of accusation, which, with the exception of one dissentient voice, that of general count Krazynski, unanimously set aside the charge of high treason, acquitted the greater part of the accused, and condemned the others to some months' imprisonment. The emperor ordered the judges to be reprimanded, a thing before unheard of; and he consoled himself by confining the accused in the dungeons of St. Petersburg: this was a violation of the constitution, and was one of the grievances subsequently alleged in defence of the Polish revolution.

In the dismal annals of Russia there is no darker day than the 25th of December, 1825. From that day until now, nearly thirty years, Nicholas has rioted in the lust of power to the bane of half the world; but at last the prophetic lines of the poet and martyr Ryleief seem on the eve of fulfilment:

“What our dreams presented to us as a decree of Heaven, was not yet resolved on high. Patience! Let us wait a little longer, till the colossus has filled up the measure of our wrongs; till, in his haste to grow strong, he has weakened himself, endeavouring to grasp half the world. Let us allow that proud heart to display its vanity in the sun. Patience! The wrath of Heaven will yet crush him to dust. In history, God is *retribution*: he will take care that the seed of sin shall bear its fruit.”

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## CHAPTER LXV.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NICHOLAS—THE CORONATION—WAR WITH PERSIA—TREATY OF TURKMANTCHAI—AFFAIRS OF GREECE.

NICHOLAS PAULOVITCH was born in 1796, the year his grandmother died. Coming into the world too late to be subjected to Catharine's martinet system of training, the natural force of his character remained unbroken. In this respect he is strongly contrasted with his elder brother, Alexander, to whom in all other moral endowments he is

lamentably inferior. On the 1st of July, 1817, Nicholas married the princess Charlotte of Prussia, daughter of Frederick William III. The new grand-duchess, on being received into the communion of the Russian church, took the name of Alexandra Feodorovna.

“It is said on all hands, that the emperor of Russia is one of the handsomest men in his empire. But the czar is cold, inanimate, without grace, and without brilliancy. He is taller than was his brother Alexander, but he has neither his smile nor that engaging exterior, nor those amiable manners which exercised such invincible attraction for all who approached him. Nicholas may be one of the *tallest* men in his empire; we will not contest his claim to that privilege; but Alexander was the most amiable, and the best beloved. Nicholas is stiff, starched, and absolutely freezing in his deportment. His features, stern and severe, show no impression. He has no freedom in his manner, but seems to imagine that his constrained demeanour displays dignity—you would say that he was inclosed from head to foot in armour of whalebone. His countenance exhibits the immovable regularity of a lifeless statue; it is correctly handsome, but there is nothing transparent; it is like marble, and it is easy to see that the kindly warmth of humanity has rarely illumined that polished brow; his aspect betrays a constant struggle between a desire to appear benevolent and the necessity of showing himself imperial; he is haughty, and yet does not inspire awe. What is peculiar in the expression of his countenance is, the want of agreement between the mouth, which sometimes will smile, and the eye, which remains cold and unlighted. It is more difficult for Nicholas to feign to be a man, than to appear as the emperor.”\*

The present autocrat of Russia is a tyrant at home and an aggressor abroad, not merely by instinct or from the force of circumstances, but what is a far more fearful thing, from principle and conviction. He by no means regards himself as “a lucky accident,” like his brother Alexander, but has an unbounded faith in his own divine right and infallibility. His negative, no less than his positive, qualities, are in complete harmony with this cardinal principle. He has few human sympathies, and knows neither pity nor remorse. He has

\* Fournier.



been called a "civilised Peter the Great," but the comparison is not a very apt one, for the minds of the two men show a great disparity in scale. The heroic lineaments of the one are wanting in the other. In one point only the resemblance is close. Nicholas is as void of humanity as was Peter, but he is more refined in his cruelties, and also far more extensive. The direct loss of life caused by his ambition is stupendous. Upon a moderate computation, more than a million of Russians have perished in the wars he has waged in Circassia, Persia, Poland, Hungary, and Turkey. If to these were added the numbers who have fallen on the side of those who fought for their liberties against the aggressions of Russia, it would probably appear that neither Julius Cæsar, nor Alexander, nor even Tamerlane, has been a greater scourge to the human race than the emperor Nicholas.

On the 22nd of September (3rd October), 1826, the coronation of the emperor took place at Moscow, in the midst of such pomp and ceremonies, that a handsome woman exclaimed, "How vexatious it is that such *fêtes* are so rare!"

On the 16th (28th) of September, an imperial manifesto declared war against Persia. The treaty of Gulistan of the 26th of October, 1813, had left an opening for inevitable disputes by stipulating that either of the two contracting parties should have the power of enlarging its territorial possessions according to circumstances, on condition of indemnifying the party injured. By virtue of this stipulation, Russia had occupied the coast of lake Goktcha, offering to Persia, by way of indemnity, the territory comprehended between the rivers Capunaktchay and Tchudof; but the shah declined accepting this arrangement.

Prince Mentchikof, who was despatched by the emperor to settle the difference, was refused an audience. The khan of Talychyn massacred the Russian garrison of Erivan, and Abbas Mirza, heir to the Persian throne, invaded the province of Elizabethpol, at the head of 50,000 regular troops. The Mussulman tribes of the Caucasus rose at his approach. On the 2nd (14th) of September, Madatof defeated the vanguard of the Persian army, on the Shamkhor, and occupied the town of Elizabethpol. On the 21st, Paskievitch joined with his division of 9000 men, and defeated Abbas Mirza on





the banks of the river Dje ham, two leagues from Elizabethpol, from which place this battle took its name. The Persians repassed the Araxes, and Grabbe obtained some advantages on the coast of the Caspian. Paskievitch was appointed commander-in-chief in the room of Yermolof, and Benkendorf succeeded Madatof in the command of the vanguard. Etchmiadzin surrendered without resistance in April, 1827. Paskievitch crossed the Araxes, and defeated the enemy's army in the battle of Djwan-Bulak; the *victorious standard* of the vanquished fell into the hands of the Russians, and Abbas Abad surrendered to them on the 19th (31st) of July.

These successes did not, however, hinder the Persians from besieging Etchmiadzin. Krassofsky in vain endeavoured to make them raise the siege, and Paskievitch was obliged to repair to his aid. The Persian prince again crossed the Araxes, Sardar Abbas surrendered to the Russians, and Erivan was occupied on the 13th of October, after six days' siege. On the 25th, Tauris, the capital of Adzerbadaidjan, and soon after, Ali-jar-Kan, shared the same fate. The Persians sued for peace, and conferences were opened on the 2nd of November. Russia demanded the cession of the provinces of Erivan and Nukhchivan, and an indemnification of twenty millions of silver rubles. Abbas Mirza accepted these conditions; but the shah's ratification was delayed for three months, which obliged Paskievitch to resume hostilities. On the 15th (27th) of January, 1828, he occupied Urmiah; Souktel entered Ardebyl, and on the 10th (22nd) of February the treaty was signed at Turkmantchai. Paskievitch received, as a reward for his conduct in this campaign, a million in money, and the title of count of Erivan. Russia acquired two provinces by this war, which cost her more labour than men.

"In the negotiations which led to the treaty of Turkmantchai, by which this war was terminated (Feb. 1828), Russia, while she disclaimed all desire of conquest, and repelled as injurious every imputation of an ambitious desire to aggrandise her territory, which she said was already as extensive as she could desire, declared that her anxiety to prevent any future collision with Persia compelled her to establish a frontier-line so well defined, as to leave no room



for doubt or discussion hereafter; and as this could be found only on the Arras (Araxes), she had no alternative but to adopt the line of that river.

“Persia, besides paying the whole expenses of the war, was, therefore, called upon to cede the important and wealthy provinces of Erivan and Nukhchivan, including the fortresses of Erivan and Abbasabad; because it was necessary to the future tranquillity of the two empires, that their common frontier should be defined by the Araxes. The sacrifice to Persia was immense; but she was in no condition to renew the war; and she consoled herself with the belief that this arrangement, while it took from her possessions infinitely more valuable, would at least give her back Talish and Moghan, from which the Russians had been driven by the revolt of the inhabitants in the commencement of the war, and which they had not been able to re-occupy. But this was not consistent with the views of Russia; and though these districts were of no real value to her, and even caused her a considerable yearly expenditure, she refused to relinquish her claim to them; treated with contempt every allusion to the promise of general Ritescheff; and when reminded that she had herself required the cession by Persia of Erivan and Nukhchivan, for the sole object of establishing the Arras as the frontier-line, and was now violating the principle she had laid down, her only answer was a threat to break off negotiations, and recommence hostilities. Persia had no alternative, and submitted.

“The object of Russia in securing this position is sufficiently obvious. The Arras is fordable, at short intervals, from the vicinity of Julfa (near the great road between Erivan and Tabreez) to a ford called Yeddee Bolook; but below that point it is never fordable. By retaining Talish and Moghan, she has secured to herself possessions beyond the Arras extending southward to the frontier of Ghilan, from the point where the river ceases to be fordable to its mouth on the Caspian Sea; and has thus laid open one of the most valuable parts of Persia to an attack at any season of the year, and placed herself in a position from which she can occupy Ghilan with most facility. That she retains her views on this rich province, is sufficiently proved by the fact that she threatened only two years ago (1834) to occupy it

as a security for the payment of 500,000 tomans (250,000*l.*) of indemnity still due to her by Persia.

“The possession of Talish and Moghan cannot be pretended to be of any real value to Russia, beyond the facility it affords for future aggressions; and that in this point of view it is of the greatest importance is demonstrated by the fact, that from the natural strength of the country, and the hostile spirit of the inhabitants, she was unable to re-establish her authority there, after the conclusion of the peace, without the aid of the Persian government.

“In the province of Nukhchivan ceded to Russia, and on the left bank of the Araxes, is the fortress of Abbasabad, constructed by a French engineer in the service of the late Abbas Mirza. Russia, not content with the fortress, demanded possession of an unfinished work intended for a tête-du-pont on the opposite bank, which she represented as a part of the fortress, though no bridge had ever been constructed; and having obtained this unfinished and untenable outwork, founded on the concession another demand. The intended tête-du-pont to an imaginary bridge required an esplanade; and a segment of a circle, with a radius of two miles, was assigned to her for this purpose.

“The second position beyond the Araxes opens to her an entrance into Persia on the other flank of the frontier, and at the nearest point of that frontier to the fortress of Khoé, the most important of all that now remain to Persia. It commands the only available line of communication between Persia and Turkey, the only road by which their commerce can pass, and consequently that by which the British trade with Persia is carried on. Its importance has not escaped the observation of Russia; she selected it as the place which she was to hold in pledge for the payment of the last instalment of the indemnity which was necessary to procure the final evacuation of the Persian territories by the Russian troops. She, therefore, held it during her war with Turkey in 1828, and felt its value in separating from one another the Persian and Ottoman dominions; but on the payment of the stipulated sum she was reluctantly compelled to surrender it.

“By the treaty of Turkmantchai, Persia was again bound to maintain no navy on the Caspian: this stipulation was

now made to rest on the prescriptive right of Russia to the exclusive privilege of having a navy on that sea, which the treaty declares she had enjoyed *ab antiquo*. This, however, was an antiquity of only thirteen years; for she acquired the exclusive right by the treaty of Gulistan, which was concluded in 1814.”\*

Whilst the war with Persia was pending, measures were in progress with respect to Greece, which resulted in consequences most advantageous to Russia in her cherished designs against the Ottoman empire. The duke of Wellington, who had been sent as ambassador extraordinary to congratulate the emperor Nicholas on his accession, expressed to count Nesselrode the indignation of his court at the atrocities perpetrated in the Morea after the debarkation of the troops of Ibrahim Pasha, and its desire to terminate the contest by a common interference. After this preliminary conversation with the Russian minister, the duke had several private interviews with the emperor, when the great question of the East was formally discussed; and then it was ascertained that the policy of Nicholas essentially differed from that of Alexander.

The emperor drew at once a broad line of distinction between the individual interests of Russia and the Turko-Greek differences which the allied powers might be called upon to adjust. He claimed the right to interfere, in common with the other powers of Europe, when it suited his policy, and to exclude them from all joint mediation whenever their co-operation militated against his own views. He did not pretend to any exclusive intervention in the affairs of Greece, although, as he adroitly observed, a religious question was involved; but he only made this concession on the distinct understanding that the powers would undertake to rescue the Greeks from the ferocity of their enemies, and thenceforth support with greater energy the Christian interests in the East. As to what might concern Russia individually, the emperor positively rejected all foreign intervention. He justified this course by a reference to anterior treaties; submitting that he only claimed rights long since ignored or violated by Turkey, reserving to himself the occasion and the

\* “Progress of Russia in the East.”

means of recovering them, but pledging himself not to compromise the existence of the Ottoman empire.

On the 4th of April, 1826, a few days before his departure from St. Petersburg, the duke of Wellington signed, with count Nesselrode, the first protocol relative to the affairs of Greece; and ultimately that protocol led to two important results, though different in their nature. The first was the celebrated treaty of London, concluded on the 6th of July, 1827, between England, France, and Russia; the second was the convention of Akerman, in Bessarabia, adjusted between Russia and Turkey. By that convention Russia obtained from the Ottoman Porte all she deemed it prudent to exact at that critical juncture: but even in that arrangement lay the germ of the treaty of Adrianople. The ostensible object of the convention of Akerman was to secure the exact fulfilment of the treaty of Bukharest; and it bound the sultan, first, to grant to the principalities of Moldavia and Vallachia, within six months at the latest, all the rights and privileges specified in the hatti-sheriff of 1802; secondly, to guarantee to Servia all its former privileges, to augment them by new advantages, and, by a particular hatti-sheriff, to define in detail all the rights of the Servians, according to a mutual agreement with the Russian court; thirdly, to satisfy the claims of Russian subjects on the Turkish government; fourthly, to accord to Russian commerce in the Black Sea and in the Mediterranean the most perfect liberty, under no pretence whatever impeding the navigation of merchantmen sailing under the Russian flag on the waters of the Ottoman empire, or hindering the vessels of the powers in alliance with Russia from entering the Black Sea; fifthly, it was stipulated that the Asiatic boundary between the two empires should remain exactly in the same state as it was at the conclusion of the convention, and that Turkey should give up all pretensions to the different forts conquered by the Russians beyond the Caucasus in the former war. The Turkish government, however, has publicly asserted, referring to the protocols in verification of the assertion, that it signed the convention on the express understanding that Russia should renounce all interference in the affairs of Greece; and this has never been publicly denied.\*

\* "Progress and Present Position of Russia in the East," p. 79. Third edition.



The treaty of London really created the modern kingdom of Greece. It proposed to the Ottoman Porte the mediation of England, France, and Russia; and unless accepted within a month, they declared that they would not tolerate the continuance of a state of things which had disturbed the East for six years, but accredit consular agents in Greece, and receive from Greece consular agents in their own countries. They also proposed an armistice pending negotiations. Finally, if the Turkish government would not listen to any terms of accommodation, or if the Greeks refused to accept the conditions proposed, the high contracting powers would instruct their representatives in London to determine what ulterior measures might be necessary. The treaty of London, however, still reserved to the sultan the suzerainté of Greece and a yearly tribute from that country. The ambassadors of the three powers, in communicating to the Porte the stipulations of the treaty of London, intimated the necessity under which they would be placed, if the Turkish government should persist in rejecting their mediation, "of recurring to such measures as they should judge most efficacious for putting an end to a state of things which was become incompatible even with the true interests of the Sublime Porte, with the security of commerce in general, and with the perfect tranquillity of Europe." Turkey regarded that note as a declaration of war, and prepared for the defence of Constantinople. Ibrahim, son of Mehemet Ali, pacha of Egypt, commander-in-chief of the Ottoman forces in Egypt, spared neither age nor sex, burning towns, devastating the fields, and even rooting up the olive-trees. Then followed the fatal victory of Navarino, in which England and France were the dupes of Russia, as the destruction of the Turkish fleet rendered the czar master of the Black Sea. The sultan demanded satisfaction for the loss he had sustained, and reparation for his wounded honour; declaring that until he received satisfaction he could hold no intercourse with the ambassadors of the three powers, who withdrew from Constantinople in December, 1827.

The secret policy of Russia was soon made manifest. She proposed "to occupy Moldavia and Vallachia in the name of the three powers," and even to march an army into Turkey, "dictating peace under the walls of the seraglio." France and England refused their assent to these violent measures,

on which Russia declared, "that in the manner of executing the treaty of London she will consult her own interests and convenience;" but this haughty menace she was for a while compelled to retract.

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## CHAPTER LXVI.

### WAR WITH TURKEY, 1828-29.

THE war with Persia was scarcely ended when that with Turkey broke out. On the 14th (26th) of August, 1828, a manifesto of the emperor was published, followed by an explanatory declaration, to which the Porte replied on the 4th of June. The two parties accused each other of not having observed the treaty of Bukharest. Turkey reproached Russia with having countenanced the insurrection of the Greeks, with having supported and received Ypsilanti, and fomented troubles in Moldavia and Vallachia. Russia, on her part, accused the divan of having stimulated the Circassians to revolt, of having fettered the commerce of the Black Sea, violated the amnesty which had been granted to Servia, supported the resistance of Persia, and retarded the peace which had just been concluded with that power.

Immediately after the declaration, field-marshal prince Wittgenstein placed himself at the head of an army of 150,000 men, and on the 7th of May crossed the Pruth at three points; Yassy and Bukharest were immediately occupied, and the administration of the two principalities was given to count Pahlen.

In Asia, general Paskievitch opened the campaign on the 7th of July, and on the 15th he took Kars. The fortress of Poti, the only one possessed by the Turks on the east coast of the Black Sea, surrendered on the 26th to a detachment of the troops of Georgia. On the 4th of September, Paskievitch gained a complete victory under the walls of Akhalzik, which surrendered on the 8th, after a vigorous resistance, in which the Russians suffered considerable loss.

At the opening of the campaign of 1828 Turkey stood absolutely on the brink of ruin. Exhausted by a conflict of

six years with the Greeks—her fleet destroyed—an army half organised according to the new fashion introduced after the destruction of the Janissaries—without an ally—she stood alone, apparently but to receive the *coup de grace*. The force put in movement by her antagonist was about one hundred thousand strong, after making due allowance for the difference between paper strength and effective strength. The Russians organised, disciplined; moving with certain obedience and unmitigated devotion to the will of the emperor: the Mussulmans exhibiting an absolute contrast, and echoing the words of the sultan:—"Gather up thy spirit, for Allah knows we are in great danger." Might it not have been supposed, with some show of reason, that the Russians would have had little but a summer's march across the Balkan?

But there were elements of strength then in Turkey, which were formerly overlooked by the Russians, as by some of us at the present time. The Russians in earlier wars, when they contended for Bessarabia, seldom met with a check from the Osmanli, if they had an opportunity of deploying their regular infantry on open ground, without being exposed to the fury of the Turkish cavalry charge. Confident in their organisation and regularity, the advantages of which they had so often proved, they never scrupled to attack very superior numbers. The traditions of former wars were not forgotten by them; and throughout the contests of the campaigns under consideration, we see them actuated by the same spirit, and displaying a like contempt for numerically stronger forces arrayed against them,—even when the enemy, as was almost invariably the case from the defensive system adopted, enjoyed the advantages of chosen and intrenched positions.

But in one respect the Russians had misreckoned. They had forgotten that such simple tactics of bold attack, under any circumstances, though suitable to the certainty of operation in a plain country, might involve them in great danger in a more intricate one, there being nothing more certain than that the more mountainous and difficult the seat of war may be, the more formidable does it become for defence by wild and irregular troops. Under such conditions the individual man recovers his separate value, which

among disciplined troops is often merged in the whole, and is lost altogether among the rabble of untaught levies, which a general may rashly attempt to deploy on flat ground, in the face of a more instructed soldiery. The Russians were quickly undeceived;—what promised so fairly in the outset, became daily more arduous. Unforeseen impediments presented themselves: detachments to cover or mask various points were necessary; difficulties arose in providing the troops and horses; in short, obstacles of every kind rose up around them. The delays and sluggishness of the Turkish administration caused but apparent danger to the Porte, and time was gained to garrison fortresses, to raise levies, and organise a rude but tolerable system of defence. Every day increased the numbers of the Turkish army, and added something, however slight, to its efficiency.

To understand the difficulty of the Russians, it is necessary to take a glance at the country they were invading. They commenced with the occupation of Vallachia, extending their right flank to the neighbourhood of Kalafat, as was done afterwards by Gortchakof in the autumn of 1853. To this no opposition was made. The Vallachian fortresses had been dismantled by the Turks after their final defeat in Bessarabia. They had determined, and wisely, not to undertake the defence of any line beyond that of the Danube. It may be assumed, that no river ever yet stopped a resolute general. But the Danube presents great difficulties, and after it is crossed, the strong places on the right bank, on the line of operations, must be either invested or taken, before the grand obstacle of the march to Constantinople, the Balkan, can be attempted. This great stream, after cutting through the chalk mountains which stretch from north to south between the Carpathian and the Balkan ranges, is altered in character. Instead of a narrow channel full of rapids and encumbered with rocks, we have a broad flowing river, intersecting thick alluvial soil, and passing through a valley nearly a hundred miles in breadth. In Little Vallachia, as far as the Aluta, the country is traversed by ridges, the spurs of the high mountains; but this region, as well as the wide extended plains of Great Vallachia, must be considered in general as flat. The banks of the Danube display a marked contrast. That of Bulgaria, from



Widdin downwards, is everywhere high and steep, and often completely commands long reaches of the river. The Val-lachian bank, on the contrary, is marked by a low shore and wide swampy meadows. The branchings of the streams form many marshy islets, and at seasons of high water the adjacent country is continually flooded. As the traveller proceeds downwards, he finds the islands larger and more numerous, the meadow flats wider and more swampy. After Rustchuk no firm ground is found on the left bank, till the spot in front of Turtukai is reached. Opposite to Silistria a good road from Kalarash to the Danube is always open. At Braila, for the first time the left bank becomes important. Below Isaktchi the river breaks through the delta in three arms, of which the Sulina, the only one navigable by vessels of much draft, is from one hundred and fifty to two hundred paces broad. In the vale country, the force of the stream averages about two miles and a half in the hour.

To any one considering the character of the Danube carefully, the difficulty it affords to an invader, and the advantages it presents on the right bank for defence, must be apparent. There it is high, precipitous, and firm. On the left there are but a few points in the line of operations of an invading army on which troops can be assembled. These points are for the most part guarded by fortresses or temporary intrenchments, as is the case at Turtukai. It is, as lately shown at the last-named place, difficult to force them in front without a combined movement from the left flank, by the march of a force up the right bank thrown across the river lower down. We in consequence observe, that the invader has been always obliged to carry his first passage of the river towards its mouth, which is too far removed from the Turkish centre of a system of defence, formed on Silistria, Varna, and Shumla, to be held strongly. This was done in 1828, and again lately by general Lüders, the operation on both occasions requiring much forethought and previous arrangement, and entailing a certain amount of bloodshed; but on neither occasion could a doubt be entertained as to the success of the Russians, Isaktcki and Matschin being usually held as outposts. Other causes for selection of the first passage of the river at this point, are the facilities afforded for bridging, and the advantages con-

ferred by the neighbourhood of the Pruth, the Black Sea, and Galatz.

Let us suppose the Danube forced, and the Turks obliged by circumstances still to remain on the defensive, debarred from action in the open field. The invading general must now narrowly examine his maps. He has a range of mountains before him, not very high, but affording only a few passes, of which the most practicable are hardly suited for military purposes. The celebrated hills, separating Rumania from Bulgaria, after running due east dip suddenly on the Black Sea. Westward at the sources of the Jantra and Tundsha the summits are clothed with snow in June. Thence towards the east the elevation does not exceed 5000 feet as far as the source of the Kamtschic, and as the eastern extremity is approached, the height of 3500 feet is rarely found. The descent on the southern side is rugged and precipitous, whilst the northern face is concealed by a system of lower hills which stretch unequally towards the valley of the Danube. The latter are often crowned with plateaux. These in many instances form the most admirable military positions for intrenched camps, being rarely accessible except by narrow paths, the eminences being revetted, as it were, by natural walls of rock, varying in height from ten to a hundred feet. They are in general well wooded, although they do not possess the magnificent forest trees of the higher Balkan range. On the plateaux and slopes we find a thickly-set jungle of dwarf oak and other shrubs, and, stretching far into the plain, an endless extent of intractable briars. Apart from the inequality of the ground, the march and deployment of troops would find very serious obstacles in the superabundant forest and jungle growth. Such is the great natural obstruction to the advance of an enemy, arising not so much on account of the height of the range as of the difficulty of access, the paucity of mountain passes, the admirable positions for defence ranged one behind another, the absence of made roads, as well of those appliances of life and civilisation to be met with in the Alpine districts of Germany and Switzerland. Without giving the names or tracing the exact course of the main passes, we may simply state that they are six in number, between the source of the

Jantra and the Black Sea, and three towards the east, between Shumla and Burgas, being those naturally chosen by an army advancing from Bessarabia. In the mountains there are no cross paths between the passes. In some of the valleys military communications may be maintained.

During the war of 1828 the fortresses on the river and Black Sea played an important part. Though imperfect in design and of insignificant profile, none of them dignified with the denomination of regular fortresses, they sustained lengthened sieges or investments, and reduced the Russian army almost to ruin. It has been said, and with truth, that when the Turks are in good heart, their defence often becomes most obstinate at the moment when more regular combatants will surrender a place. That which with us is considered an element of weakness, is with them one of strength. The larger the number of the population of a town, exclusive of the garrison, the longer and more tenacious will be the defence. In the smaller fortresses, where the soldiery has not been aided by the people, it has been rarely respectable. In those of more considerable area, in which the crowd has taken arms, the garrison have found themselves reinforced, by men as capable and as willing as themselves, in defending the tottering walls.

On the 8th of June, 1828, the Russians crossed the Danube, near its mouth, at Satunovo, and within six weeks of that time had taken Braila on the left bank, never afterwards restored, and had penetrated so far, as to be in the centre of the triangle formed by Silistria, Varna, and Shumla. On the 20th of July a resultless action was fought, after which an attempt was made to invest Shumla; we say an attempt, as the means at the disposal of the Russians were never sufficient to command the roads in the rear, and at no time was the Turkish communication with Adrianople interrupted. Shumla is the ordinary point of assembly of the Turkish army in a war against the Russians. It is backed by a chain of mountains which encircle it to the north, west, and south in the form of a vast crescent, and it has on the eastern front a marshy ravine which empties its waters into the Kamtschie. It is only accessible from the east. The extensive slope of the hills on that side is somewhat gradual and glacis-like. The upper plateau, round which run the works—a position

intended as it were by nature for an intrenched camp,—the group of hills, of which it forms a part, being separated from the Balkan range by the valley of the Kamtschie—is elevated above the Bulgarian plain from 600 to 800 feet. The town is built in a confined and low valley terminating in steep ravines, and is quite open. The lines of the intrenched camp run along the crest of the hill glacis to the left from the height of Strandscha, to the right leaning on that of Tchengell. These lines overtop Shumla to the north and south, and they have been carried in some parts along the verge of the steepest precipices, where they are of no use, and present the appearance of an aqueduct. They are of earthwork, and have a narrow but deep ditch. Their extent from Strandscha to the heights of Tchengell is about 8000 paces, and there is ample space to cover completely an immense army.

The few roads by which an enemy can approach are defiles many miles long, terminating in a few difficult paths up the wall-like rocks, where there can be neither combination of the different arms, nor deployment of masses. But the height of Strandscha is vulnerable. It possesses revetted forts, but is by no means secure against assault. If the summit of that height be won, Shumla can no longer be held. It is only accessible on that part, and from the nature of the ground, consisting of marshes and ravines, approach is not easy even in that direction. It is said in some quarters that Shumla has gained a greater reputation than it deserves. The Turks have already experienced that it could be turned by a determined adversary, after Varna had been taken. But its position, not only on the direct route from Rustchuk and Silistria, but also at the head of the valley which debouches on the Gulf of Varna, must, until the fall of the latter, give it a first-rate military importance; and in any case, as will be shown hereafter in allusion to the campaign of 1829, utterly disconcert a Russian commander, however successfully he may have turned it, and have actually reached Adrianople by communicating with the Black Sea.

The Russians, in their extreme confidence, tried their hands on Shumla, thinking thus to take the shortest cut across the Balkan, and secure their rear, the fortresses of Varna and Silistria being yet surmounted by the crescent. The attempt failed, though in the first instance directed by



the czar in person. From various causes of sickness, necessity of detachment, the masking of Silistria, and the investment of Varna, the Russians discovered that they had attempted an impossibility. The besieging and blockading force quickly dwindled to a less number than the enemy it sought to shut up. They soon began to intrench themselves, and to depend on lines of redoubts. At the end of July it was already evident that no favourable result could ensue. Frequent combats and surprises took place during the following month. The assailants were decimated by exposure to the heat, and the fatigue of procuring forage from a distance, till at length, on the 10th of September, they acknowledged their defeat, by the determination of general count Wittgenstein to convert the so-called investment into a mere process of observation, and to concentrate his troops in Seni-Bazar. Had the Turkish commanders displayed at that time but moderate activity, there would have been an end of the Russian *corps d'armée*. The grand vizier advanced from Adrianople with 14,000 picked men, but he did no more. The Russian division, which, during the months of August and September had been in a most critical situation, was in consequence saved from destruction by his apathy and supineness.

The siege of Varna had been commenced in form by prince Mentchikof on the 6th of August. The Russians, masters of the sea, were promptly assisted by their fleet in the conveyance of troops and stores of all kinds for the siege. In the actual prosecution of the operations, the shallowness of the harbour of Varna prevented much advantage being gained from its presence, beyond the strict blockade, and interruption of communication with Constantinople. The town had an old Byzantine castle, which was used as a powder magazine. The principal enceinte, having a circumference of about two miles and a quarter, is an earthen rampart, without much command, connected with the rocky precipice jutting on the sea to the north, and running round Varna to the Dewna river. It was flanked by ten small bastions, the faces of which were pierced for two guns, and the flanks for one. The curtains, owing to their narrowness, did not admit of guns; the ditch was small, wet at the eastern extremity, otherwise dry; the scarp and counterscarp revetted

with brickwork; in the front of the rampart there were scarcely any permanent works, not even a covered way. Three lunettes had been hastily thrown up 500 paces in advance of the west front, and an intrenchment 1500 paces from the north side of the place.

It is not easy to conceive a more imperfect *place d'armes*. Yet in this the Turks managed to maintain themselves till the 10th of October, and it would not have fallen then, but for the same cause which saved the force under Wittgenstein after the failure before Shumla,—the incredible apathy which distinguished every Turkish commander during that war, excepting two or three in command of fortresses. The czar, believing that the relief of Varna would be strongly attempted by Omer Vrione, who had been detached by the grand vizier from Shumla for that purpose on the 24th of September, caused him to be attacked on the heights of Kurtepe. In vain the Russian commander alleged want of means to assail a numerous enemy in a strong position: the order was peremptory. The previous skirmishes had been bloody and damaging; success could hardly be looked for. A furious attack was made; the Russian soldiery displayed an ardour and discipline under extreme difficulty which have never been surpassed, and suffered a loss of 1400 men; but the object was not obtained; Omer Vrione maintained the heights; the prince of Wurtemberg was compelled to retreat. The former had it in his power at once to relieve Varna; he would make no effort. For a fortnight he was within sight of the place, allowing the Russians quietly to continue their assaults and contemplating the defence of the garrison. At length, the example of Jussuf Pasha shook the firmness of the garrison. They surrendered on the 11th of October; Omer Vrione, as he richly deserved, was then beaten back by the besieging force, which he had abstained from molesting, when he could have done it with so much ease and advantage.

During this campaign, the investment of Silistria, owing to bad management and want of troops, consequent on such varied operations, was a failure from beginning to end. With the fall of Varna the campaign came to a close. The eastern part of Bulgaria had thus fallen into the hands of the Russians, who occupied the position between Shumla and the sea. This

was the sole result of the long and uninterrupted campaign of three months, posterior to the passage of the Danube, and, as it has been observed, was the consequence of an apathy so suspicious, that we must refer it to treacherous intention. But for this cause the Russians must have retreated from Varna, as they did from Shumla. The whole object of their undertaking would have been missed. As it was, they were brought to the verge of calamity, by the mere force of inaction on the part of the Turks. For that can hardly be called a systematic scheme of defence, of which the only apparent feature in the conduct of the commanders, not in command of besieged fortresses, was the most apathetic sluggishness, which abandoned places to their fate when almost the raising of a hand would have saved them; which refused to seize the advantage when it had been won, through the overweening confidence and rashness of the Russian autocrat. But the truth is, if there was not treachery, the traditions of former wars were against the Turkish leaders, and they knew that science failed them. They believed more in the skill of their enemy than in their own capacity for resistance. Their energy died within them. There was a marasmus of their vital power. This fatal disease was ultimately spread among their followers. When they were not under its influence, at the first sieges of the war, at Braila, on the left bank of the Danube, at Varna, at Silistria, and in many of the skirmishes and battles, their bearing was good, and often heroic. During the early part of the second campaign they still merited praise.

In recapitulating the chief events of the campaign of 1829, we are simply dealing with the story of one siege, one battle, and of a march of 500 miles. The siege was that of Silistria; the battle, the battle of Kuleftcha; the march, the march across the Balkan upon Adrianople. As is well known, the war terminated by negotiations opened and concluded at that town between marshal Diebitsch and negotiators appointed by the sultan. The treaty which resulted from these must always remain one of the strangest passages in diplomatic history. The Russian commander, who affected to dictate terms to the sultan, found himself with a force nominally of 20,000 men in a hostile town which counted

80,000 inhabitants. Moltke gives the number of effective combatants at Adrianople as 30,000. As many more Albanians were at Sophia. Of the fortresses on the Danube, Widdin, Nicopolis, Sistowa, and Rustchuk still held out; Shumla, with a very considerable force, remained in the hands of the Turks. The communication between Adrianople and the ports on the Black Sea might at any moment have been cut off. Diebitsch and his army were completely isolated, and removed from all possibility of succour. Bad as all this was, and hopeless as the condition of the Russians as thus described, the debilitated and sickly state of their forces in Adrianople was worse than all. Diebitsch's troops were melting away in his hands under the influence of a combination of diseases, and yet, being in this situation, he wrested from the ignorance and timidity of his opponents the solid fruits of victory, and all the results of the most successful campaign.

The czar had withdrawn from the scene of action, and retired to St. Petersburg, taking with him the whole diplomatic body—a matter of no slight importance to the general who was charged with the responsibility of the operations. He was now at liberty to act upon purely strategic grounds, without reference to counsels which he could not disregard, whatever doubts he might entertain as to their soundness. Immediately his hands were at liberty, general Diebitsch set about the reorganisation of the army, which had been sadly shattered by the events of the last campaign. He found himself, when every exertion had been made, at the head of 68,000 combatants, many of whom bore upon their faces marks of the severe suffering which they had undergone during the preceding year. "According to the testimony of an eye-witness," writes the baron von Moltke, "the men's faces wore an expression of sadness and of pain. After all that they had suffered in the former campaign, they looked upon themselves as martyrs to their religion and their emperor. Nowhere in the Russian quarters were to be seen or heard the jokes that never fail among German soldiers when in tolerable plight. Singing was the only expression of joy which was heard, but the songs had the melancholy character peculiar to the Slavonian race. The soldiers were much



given to religious ceremonies, and crossed themselves at every meal; in every camp a tent was fitted up as a church, and mass celebrated daily."

The great difficulty, however, was the commissariat. Thousands of waggons drawn by oxen were provided for the service of the army on the northern side of the Balkan; for his provision train on the southern side of this mountain chain, general Diebitsch relied upon camels which had been brought from Asia for the purpose. Upon the side of the Turks there was far greater confidence than at the beginning of the preceding campaign. The troops of the sultan—that is, the raw levies which had displaced the Janissaries—had actually stood the shock of the Muscovites in the field, and had even, upon occasion, returned as victors. Shumla still stood firm—the Balkan had been unassailed. The state of feeling throughout the Turkish dominions had, on the whole, improved, and the sultan Mahmoud reckoned that, after so effective a resistance as he had displayed in 1828, the diplomacy of Europe would not suffer him to be crushed in 1829. Redschid Pasha was named to the command-in-chief, and on the 21st of April set out for Shumla, where he found a force of 10,000 men. The spring passed away in inaction on either side; preparations were in active progress on that of the Russians for the passage of the Balkan—an operation to which all others were made subservient. To effect this with safety, it was necessary to secure a *dépôt* at the other side of the mountains, where the troops who had effected the passage might find temporary security and refreshment at the termination of this portion of the enterprise. In pursuance of this design, the port of Sizeboli was seized by a naval *coup de main*. It is said to be the best and safest harbour on the western coast of the Black Sea, and the possession of it was of great importance to the Russians in their subsequent operations.

We pass over the subsequent fruitless attempts of the Turks to recover possession of Sizeboli. Mention of the capture of a Russian ship of 45 guns, the *Raphael*, by the Turkish squadron, cannot, however, be altogether omitted from the narrative of the campaign. The Capudan Pasha, Achmet Papudji (the shoemaker), entered the Black Sea at the head of a Turkish fleet, and, while he was lying at anchor

one night, the *Raphael* and her consort (the brig *Mercury*), then cruising in the waters of Anatolia, sailed down to the Turkish fleet, and let go their anchors in the midst of the enemy's ships. It is said by our author that the Turks were so inexpert in their new trade of marine warfare, that if the Russians had hoisted the red flag, they would have quietly assumed that the new comers were a reinforcement which had joined them in the night. The brig set all sail, and escaped; the *Raphael* struck her flag; and so pleased was Achmet the Shoemaker with the fine Russian ship which his Prophet had delivered into his hands, while he was fast asleep in his cabin, that he returned to Constantinople with his fleet and his prize without attempting any other feat of war. The siege of Silistria, however, is the first great feature in the campaign which claims our attention.

General Diebitsch arrived before Silistria on the 17th of May. It is a striking example of the national character of the Turks that, during the interval which had elapsed between the raising of the siege of 1828 and the renewal of that siege in 1829, they had absolutely done nothing—beyond digging out a few temporary works—to strengthen the fortifications of this important place. The value of it to the Turks can scarcely be exaggerated as a security against a march upon the Balkan. Baron von Moltke tells us that it lies at a distance of only two days' march right on the flank of any possible operations from the northward against that chain of mountains. As long as it was held by a numerous garrison, it would have been necessary either to mask it by the presence of a superior force, or to run a risk which few Russian generals would have cared to encounter, even when matched against no acuter strategists than the Turkish commanders as they were in 1828-29. The place was finally won by mining and countermining far more than by bombardment or open assault. In the previous campaign the Russians had learnt to respect the valour of the Turkish soldier when fighting from behind stone walls, and rightly judged that the shovel and pickaxe were far safer, as well as more certain, weapons in their own hands than either bayonet or sabre. The greatest want of skill was shown by the Turkish counterminers; they suffered themselves to be forestalled at every point, frequently only by a few minutes. The countermines

which they did fire exploded at wrong times and places, and produced scarcely any effect. In other respects the conduct of the besieged was admirable. It was certainly a great feat of arms to defend the place for six weeks; for the ramparts were insignificant, the flanking defences so indifferent that it was possible to look into the fortress, and to enfilade the greater part of the curtains; while permanent outworks, with the exception of those connecting the city with the Danube, were altogether wanting. The ditch did not exceed from eight to ten feet in depth, and could not be flooded, the bottom of it being above the level of the Danube.

Even despite of all their failures and unskilfulness, it is generally thought that disunion among the commanders and want of provisions had more to do with the surrender than any other cause. Probably, had there been a Butler or a Nasmyth at that day present with the garrison of Silistria, the result might have been different; but, as it was, at the end of June, general Diebitsch found himself free to carry out his plan against the Balkan, as far as the garrison of Silistria was concerned. The place was his, and his flank relieved from all danger from that quarter; but before proceeding on his way, he had to deal with the army of the grand vizier, which could bring against him at any point he might choose for action a force which would probably exceed his own.

On the day that Silistria was invested, an attempt was made at Eski Arnautlar, by Redschid Pasha, to turn a Russian position, and the advantage apparently remained with the Turks. He retreated, after an engagement which had lasted for fifteen hours, but halted on a spot from which, his left flank being in connexion with Shumla, he threatened the Russians with renewed attack. It was but a threat. The fight had been a very bitter one, and had been so energetically conducted by the Moslem, that it reminded those present at it of the impetuosity of the old Turkish onslaught. At the great battle of Kosleftcha, in which field-marshal Diebitsch commanded against the grand vizier in person, on the 11th of June, the attempt being made to cut off the latter from his camp at Shumla, the same impetuosity was visible for a time. But quickly came the reverse, and the Turks, who at the commencement of the assault had shown the boldest courage,

displayed, when pressed back and reduced to defend themselves, a most craven spirit. The army was broken up and lost in the woods. The Russians could not make prisoners amidst the pathless forests; and in the course of a fortnight the remains of the Ottoman host were again assembled at Shumla, not much reduced in numbers, but thenceforth useless as an army. Their patience and fortitude had now utterly vanished. There was a race of pusillanimity and folly between leaders and soldiery.

Even now, had the measures contemplated by the Turks been completed but a fortnight earlier, the Balkan would have been secure during this campaign; and it was not probable that the resources of the Russian empire would have supported a third attempt of the kind. Hussein Pasha was at Rustchuk, Redschild Pasha himself at Shumla. Their plan was to collect a force of 60,000 men, and to operate between Silistria and Shumla on the flank of the Russians as they advanced. They looked to the Upper Danube for their provisions, and, from all narratives of the campaign which we have met with, exclusive of Moltke's, it would appear that such a force might have been collected, if not precisely of the amount named, at least numerous enough to compel the Russians to win their way to the Balkan by a succession of victories over a foe against whom they would be called upon to operate under every circumstance of strategical disadvantage. The timely precautions were, however, neglected. The needful force was not collected; the communications were not established; the fortifications of Silistria were not repaired; the place was allowed to fall into the hands of the enemy; and now the Russian general was free to carry out his plan of crossing the Balkan with no greater impediment than the grand vizier, by his own unassisted efforts, might be able to throw in his way. This officer, who had been apathetic when he should have displayed energy, now chose the wrong moment for exhibiting the latter quality, when the characteristic *non-chalance* of the Turk would have much better served his turn.

Shumla might now be disregarded. Silistria was closely invested, and about to fall. Varna was the trophy and the gain of the preceding year's campaign. The Dobrudsha was under the control of the Russians—the sea absolutely their own. Sizeboli had been taken, and was ready to afford suc-



cour and refreshment to the troops when the passage had been effected. There had been constant showers to refresh the grass and the air. Forage for the cavalry was to be found in the mountains, and the weather was not yet overpoweringly hot. All these considerations were suggestive of immediate action, but, on the other hand, Diebitsch found himself but at the head of 25,000 men—10,000 of whom he must leave before Shumla to watch the operations of the vizier, and consequently he had but 15,000 at his disposal for an advance into the heart of the enemy's country. The Russian general went to Shumla in person, and was at first inclined to risk a sudden attack upon the town; but prudence prevailed, as the town contained 18,000 fighting inhabitants, and the possession of Shumla would have exercised no very decisive influence on the great operation which Diebitsch had resolved to accomplish. The opposing forces remained in a state of half truce, half skirmish, during a whole month—that is to say, from the middle of June until the middle of July. In this interval of comparative inaction, the news of the fall of Silistria was received in the Russian camp, and the *corps d'armée* which had been investing that fortress thus became disengaged. The Russian forces then before Shumla were divided into four bodies,—the first, under general Krassewski, was left to watch Shumla; the second, under general Roth, was to pass along the road from Varna to Burgas; the third, under general Rüdiger, was to cross the mountain from Pravadi to Aidos; the fourth, under general Pahlen, was to act as a reserve to the two preceding columns. About the 17th or 18th of July the great operation began. The men marched in caps, in linen trousers, and in uniform. Each carried his great-coat and knapsack, and the knapsack contained one shirt and one pair of trousers. Each man carried, besides, provision for ten days. Baggage of every other kind was left behind.

The obstacles which the Russians met with during their passage of the great range of mountains which had been regarded for four centuries as the bulwark of the Turkish empire on that side arose entirely from the natural difficulties of the country. A perfect bewilderment seemed to have taken possession of the Turkish leaders. The troops, too, which during the previous campaign, and even until the battle of

Kuleftcha, had fairly grappled with the Muscovite legions and made them pay a heavy price even for victory, had now forgotten their former spirit and enthusiasm. The Balkan, in 1829, might have been defended inch by inch as the Tyrol was against the French and Bavarian forces at an earlier period of the century; but the Turks abandoned all their advantages, left the passes open, and, even when present in overwhelming numbers, were too much dismayed to receive the arms which the Russian division was on the point of laying down. For example, towards the end of July, the Russians, under general Rüdiger, were advancing on Aidos. The grand vizier, to meet this attack, detached a corps of 10,000 or 12,000 men to Aidos. As soon as their skirmishers were beaten in the Turks fled with precipitation, passing through the town, which they left to the enemy without firing a shot. An immense booty of tents, powder, military cloaks, arms, and ammunition fell into the hands of the Russians, but the triumph was a fatal one to the victors. The dead bodies of men, horses, camels, lay about polluting the air in every direction, and Moltke conjectures "that the seeds of the disease which henceforth raged among the Russian troops were probably sown during their stay in Aidos." On another occasion, a Russian force but 800 strong was surrounded by a Turkish corps numbering no less than 15,000 men. This occurred at Jamboli. There had been a desultory engagement on the 31st of July, and on the 1st of August the Russians expected to be cut to pieces. No such thing; in the night the Turks evacuated the town which they held in such force, and retired—the infantry to Adrianople, the cavalry to Shumla. The enormous stores in the Turkish camp fell into the hands of the astonished victors, among which were 39,000 pud of biscuit, and 100,000 cartridges. Is it astonishing, in the face of an organised panic such as this, that the Russians were at last able to stagger on to Adrianople, although suffering themselves from sickness of various kinds in most appalling forms, and having been guilty of the greatest mistakes? On the 19th of August, four weeks after having crossed the Balkan, the Russian forces came in sight of the four minarets of the sultan Selim's mosque. The whole story reads like fiction. Had there been a man to direct and a few thousand men to obey,

the advance of the Russians under Diebitsch across the Balkan, and from the Balkan to Adrianople, was as utterly impossible as would have been the march of a hostile corporal's guard from Harwich to Edinburgh. It was scarcely necessary to strike a determined blow; a harassing, vexatious guerilla warfare of light cavalry was all that was requisite to render the advance impracticable. It might have been *de bonne guerre* to have permitted the advance, but then measures should have been taken to profit by the false position of Diebitsch's army. Adrianople was capable of defence.

The old part of the town is surrounded by a wall, but it is completely hidden by new buildings, and the town is overlooked on every side, although only from a distance. Without the town, hollow roads, ditches, and garden walls afford great facilities for the defence, and the approaches may be covered by troops so drawn up as to rest upon the rivers, but only in corps of not less than 40,000 or 50,000 men. The new Turkish fortifications consisted merely of a ditch between the Tundscha and the Upper and Lower Maritza, flanked by a few unfinished batteries.

There were in Adrianople at least 20,000 combatants, the armed inhabitants, independently of the troops, who numbered as many more, and who might very readily have been increased to twice or thrice that number. Detachments from various parts of the Turkish empire were on their way to Adrianople under the command of the pashas, who had learnt too late that the existence of the empire was at stake. But these succours were as though they had not been, for in war the golden opportunity for action soon passes away unless advantage be taken of the propitious moment.

Even when Diebitsch found himself at Adrianople, he was convinced that nothing but a speedy and unmolested retreat could save the remnant of his victorious army. Rustchuk and Shumla were still held in his rear. An army of irregulars threatened his right. His forces, so feeble in numbers when he adventured on his undertaking of the passage of the Balkans (under 20,000 men), were losing hundreds daily from sickness. By skilful demonstrations, by carefully masking his real condition, by acting on the fears of the Turks and their surprising ignorance, and perhaps in some

instances with the connivance of a section of the negotiators at Constantinople, headed as they were by baron Müffling, he succeeded in securing the terms of a conqueror instead of incurring durance as a prisoner of war. But this was owing to the genius of the man, aided by the infatuation or the treachery of his opponents and their advisers. The time and the circumstances were favourable to him ; but if a lesson on the obstacles in the country in which he had operated may be learned by any means, it must be in the consideration of the fact, that the Russian army of 70,000 actual combatants which began a campaign in May, its flank secured by the Black Sea, the operations of which were conducted on the most strictly scientific principles, their base running parallel to, and having been secured by, the fleet before the field was taken—an army which, from first to last, never met with a reverse, the *morale* of its enemy being for the time utterly lost, was, in September, in a position of difficulty, whence it could alone be rescued by a subtle diplomacy. No term but that of rescue can adequately convey the idea of its happy extrication from a situation of almost overwhelming peril.

As is said by von Moltke, "If the difficulty of crossing the Balkan was formerly much over-estimated, the result of the campaign of 1828-29 has caused many persons to imagine that it is no impediment. We must not, however, forget that in that year the mountains were not defended at all." Yet it is calculated the loss of men by death was, in the Russian army, about 60,000 in number ; that one-seventh of the original force returned to tell of the glorious campaign, of which the grand feature was the passage of the Balkan by a detachment of the former. As an instance of the dreadful mortality in the Russian ranks, we give two items, officially authenticated—viz., in the general hospitals : From March to July, in 1829, 28,746 deaths occurred among 81,214 patients ; and of the 6000 men left sick at Adrianople, on the retreat of Diebitsch, 5200 died. In one word, the army had been annihilated, though it had never met with a check.

In Asia, the opening of the campaign was retarded by a crime committed against the ambassador at Teheran. On the 12th of February, the Russian legation attempted to detain an Armenian woman, who was a Russian subject ; this circumstance excited the indignation of the populace, who



proceeded in arms to the hotel of the legation. Some of their party having been killed by the Cossacks, the crowd massacred all the persons attached to the legation, with the exception of the secretary, who was absent at the time. The shah, to prevent any disagreeable discussion, punished the guilty, and sent his grandson to St. Petersburg, to express to the emperor his regret at the occurrence. Being released from all apprehensions on that side, Paskievitch resumed hostilities in Asia, where Akhalzik was besieged by the Turks. On the 13th of May, general Bourzof defeated Achmet Khan. On the 1st of July, Paskievitch, anticipating the junction of the seraskier of Erzerum with Hagki Pasha in the valley of Zevine, marched against the former, whom he put to flight, and on the next day defeated the latter, whom he took prisoner; thirty-one pieces of cannon, nineteen standards, and fifteen hundred prisoners were the trophies of this twofold victory. On the 5th of July he took Hassan-Khale, the key of Erzerum, the capital of Turcomania, which surrendered on the 9th.

This war, the most disastrous in its consequences in which Turkey had yet been engaged, was terminated by the treaty of Adrianople. The emperor Nicholas, in deference to the jealousy of Europe, had publicly disclaimed all intention to aggrandise his dominions; and yet by this treaty he acquired Anapa and Poti, with a considerable extent of coast on the Black Sea; a portion of the pashalik of Akhilska, with the two fortresses of Akhilska and Akhilkilae, and the virtual possession of the islands formed by the mouths of the Danube; stipulated for the destruction of the Turkish fortress of Giurgievo, and the abandonment by Turkey of the right bank of the St. George's branch of the Danube to the distance of several miles from the river; attempted a virtual separation of Moldavia and Vallachia from Turkey by sanitary regulations intended to connect them with Russia; stipulated that the Porte should confirm the internal regulations for the government of those provinces which Russia had established while she occupied them; removed, partly by force and partly by the influence of the priesthood, many thousand families of Armenians from the Turkish provinces in Asia to his own territories, as he had already moved nearly an equal number from Persia, leaving whole districts depopulated, and

sacrificing, by the fatigues and privations of the compulsory march, the aged and infirm, the weak and the helpless.

He established for his own subjects in Turkey an exemption from all responsibility to the national authority, and burdened the Porte with an immense debt, under the name of indemnity for the expenses of the war and for commercial losses; and finally retained Moldavia, Wallachia, and Silistria in pledge for the payment of a sum which Turkey could not hope in many years to liquidate. Having by this treaty imposed upon Turkey the acceptance of the protocol of the 22nd of March, which secured to her the suzeraineté of Greece and a yearly tribute from that country, Russia used all her influence to procure the independence of Greece; and the violation by herself and her allies of the agreement which she had made an integral part of the treaty of Adrianople. Greece was finally separated from Turkey, and erected into an independent state, of which count Capo d'Istria, who had been a Russian minister, was named president.

In the course of her hostilities with Turkey in Asia, Russia had developed new and extensive projects of future conquest. The Turkish pashalic of Bagdad had for many years been in the hands of a body of Georgians, who, like the Mamelukes in Egypt, had usurped almost the whole power of the government, and left the Porte no alternative but to sanction and legitimise the authority which some one of the number from time to time had usurped. The pasha of Bagdad, when the Russians invaded Turkish Armenia, was a Georgian of the name of Daud, or David; a man of much energy and ambition, who aimed at establishing his own independence. A brother of the pasha, who had continued to reside in his native country, and was now, therefore, a Russian subject, carried on a petty trade between Tiflis and Bagdad, and became the medium of communication between his masters and his brother. Almost all the officers of trust in the pashalic were held by Georgians; and they all had connexions in their native country,—many of their nearest relatives were in the Russian service. The influence of the government of Georgia in Bagdad began to be felt; and when general Paskievitch found himself at Erzerum, on the banks of a branch of the Euphrates, and not far from the stream of the Tigris, he conceived the project of descending

these rivers, and occupying the modern capital of Assyria and Mesopotamia. But the successes of general Diebitsch on the Balkan had placed Russia in so advantageous a position, with means so inadequate to maintain it, that it was considered imprudent to hazard a failure on the side of Asia, and the emperor therefore abandoned the enterprise for a time.

No opportunity was lost to form connexions with the chiefs of Koordistan; but these wild mountaineers, though they sometimes yielded to the influence which then was dominant, exhibited on some occasions a fidelity to their sovereign, and a manly spirit and intelligence, which did them infinite honour. Tymour, pasha of Van, on the approach of the Russians, sent a message to the prince royal of Persia, offering to deliver up his pashalic into his royal highness's hands if he would engage to protect it from the Russians, and surrender it to the Porte at the termination of the war.

Thus Russia, by a long series of hostilities and intrigues, had not only conquered a large extent of the European and Asiatic territories of Turkey, but brought about the actual separation of Greece, and attempted the virtual separation of Servia, Moldavia, and Vallachia from the Ottoman empire; had contemplated the occupation of Bagdad, and extended her secret connexions to that pashalic and to the mountains of Koordistan.\*

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## CHAPTER LXVII.

### THE INSURRECTION OF POLAND.

THE encroachments of Russia in the East, and the deplorable treaty of Adrianople, by which they were confirmed, naturally excited alarm in the governments of Great Britain and Austria; but the times were unfavourable to vigorous action on the part of those powers, and they contented themselves with protesting against the evil which they had not the boldness to prevent or redress. Chief among the causes of this supineness appears to have been the attitude of the two other great Western powers. Prussia was devoted to the interests of the czar, and France, under the elder branch of

\* "Progress of Russia in the East," pp. 87-90.

the Bourbons, would have sided with Russia in a general war. In 1829, negotiations for an offensive and defensive alliance were begun between the cabinets of St. Petersburg and the Tuileries. That alliance was to have been specially directed against England. France was to receive back the provinces on the Rhine. Hanover, wrested from Great Britain, was to be divided into two parts, the one destined to indemnify Holland, the other to be given as a bonus to Prussia, whose territory was further to be augmented by the addition of a part of Saxony to the Prussian provinces of Silesia. The king of Saxony was to be compensated at the expense of Poland. To Austria were to be secured Servia, a part of Dalmatia not in her possession, and one of the two banks of the Danube. Russia, mistress of the opposite bank, would have the dominion of the Black Sea, and seat herself in Constantinople, whence she might at her leisure invade Asia.\*

When all seemed thus ripe for the consummation of Russia's long-cherished designs, came the French revolution of July, 1830, which completely reversed the foreign policy of France. An event so inimical to his interests, and so subversive of the principle of legitimacy, of which he regarded himself as the consecrated champion, infuriated Nicholas, and he was preparing to invade France with all his forces, when the insurrection of Poland effected a timely diversion in favour of the throne of the barricades.

On the 24th of May, 1829, Nicholas was crowned at Warsaw. He pronounced on his knees a prayer, in which we observe the following words: "O my Lord, and my God, may my heart be always in Thy hand, and may I reign for the happiness of my people, and to the glory of Thy holy name, according to the charter granted by my august predecessor, and already sworn to by me, in order that I may not dread to appear before Thee on the day of the last judgment."

On the 28th of May the emperor opened the Polish diet, with a speech in the French language, and in a very lofty tone. Some complaints were uttered in the assembly, to which the czar paid little attention. They related to the suppression of publicity for the discussions of the diet, to the restrictions

\* Louis Blanc, "History of Ten Years," Introduction.



on the press, the vexatious conduct of the police, and the cruelties of Constantine.

The news of the revolution of the 30th of July was the spark that kindled the elements of discontent which existed in Warsaw. On the 29th of November the standard-bearers forced the entrance of the Belvidere palace; Gendre and Lubowicki were killed; Constantine escaped by a secret door, and took refuge in the ranks of his guard. The Polish hussars flew to arms, and seized on the arsenal. Constantine had 10,000 men, and might have crushed the revolt in the bud; but his courage failed him, and he preferred evacuating Warsaw. A provisional administration was instituted in that city, of which prince Adam Czartoryski was president, and Chlopicki received the command of the troops. The new authority sent proposals to the grand-duke's camp, to which he was not authorised to accede. He retired into Volhynia. Chlopicki was nominated dictator, and the diet was convoked for the 18th of December. It continued Chlopicki in his post, and formed a national council, to take the place of the provisional government.

On the 24th of December, Nicholas published a manifesto against "the *infamous treasons*, which employed *lies*, threats, and delusive promises, in order to subject the peaceable inhabitants to a few rebels."

"The Poles," says the manifesto, "who after so many misfortunes enjoyed peace and prosperity under the shadow of our power, precipitate themselves anew into the abyss of revolution and calamity, are *an assemblage of credulous beings*, who, though already seized with terror at the thought of the chastisement which awaits them, dare to dream for a few moments of victory, and to propose conditions to us, their lawful sovereign!"

On the 10th of January, 1831, the Poles published a manifesto, stating their grievances. It contains the following paragraphs: "The union of the crown of an autocrat and of a constitutional king is one of those political anomalies which cannot long exist. Everybody foresaw that the kingdom would become the germ of liberal institutions for Russia, or succumb under the iron hand of its despotism; the question was soon decided. Public instruction was corrupted; a system of obscurantism was organised; the people were shut out from all means of obtaining instruction; an entire pala-

minate was deprived of its representation in the council; the chambers lost the faculty of voting the budget; new burdens were imposed; monopolies were created, calculated to dry up the sources of the national wealth; and the treasury, augmented by these measures, became the prey of paid hirelings, infamous incendiary agents, and despicable spies.

"Calumny and espionage had penetrated even into the privacy of families; had infected with their poison the liberty of domestic life, and the ancient hospitality of the Poles had become a snare for innocence. Personal liberty, which had been solemnly guaranteed, was violated; the prisons were crowded; courts-martial were appointed to decide in civil cases, and imposed infamous punishments on citizens, whose only crime was that of having attempted to save from corruption the spirit and the character of the nation."

The most enthusiastic of the Poles could hardly conceal from themselves that in defying the power of Russia, without a single ally to support them, they engaged in a hopeless struggle. Austria and Prussia established each an army of 60,000 men on their respective frontiers, and gave notice of their intention immediately to act in concert with Russia if they were threatened with disturbance in Posen or Galicia. England remained neutral, and France, under the ignoble influence of Louis Philippe, had only a barren sympathy to bestow on the heroic people who had covered her threatened liberties with their own bodies. Chlopicki having resigned the dictatorship, prince Michael Radzivil was appointed generalissimo of the Poles. He was incapable as a commander, and was selected on account of his relationship with the royal house of Prussia, and the good effect which it was thought so great a name would have with the powers. Chlopicki, moreover, promised to aid him with his advice.

It was in the beginning of February that field-marshal Diebitsch Sabalkanski entered Poland with 120,000 Russians and 400 pieces of cannon. To oppose this formidable invasion, the Poles had but 35,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 136 pieces of artillery. The remaining forces of the country, amounting to 15,000 men, were disposed of in the garrisons of Prague, Modlin, and Lamosc.

Diebitsch's army had crossed the marshes of the Upper Narew over the ice, and was shut in between the Narew and the Bug as it marched towards the confluence of those two rivers;

but a night's thaw having suddenly occurred, the marshal abruptly changed his plan of campaign, and determined to transfer his line of operations to the left bank of the Bug, leaving behind him all his left wing, composed of 25,000 grenadiers, under the command of prince Szachoskoï. Chlopicki guessed that this great movement was intended. He proposed to cross the Bug, and fall on the Russian columns as they severally came up, or else to take post on the left bank, to drive the enemy into the thawed river, and prevent its passage, so as to shut in Diebitsch between two broad currents which were about to become impassable. Others thought of burning Warsaw, transferring the war to another theatre, joining the revolted Lithuanians, and pushing on, if needful, to Constantinople, from which point, obtaining the aid of Turkey, they might keep in check the huge unwieldy empire of the czar. This plan, if daringly executed, might have saved Poland; but Radzivil thought only of gathering all his troops round the capital and coming to a decisive engagement at Praga.

On the 19th of February the Polish army deployed on all the line extending from the marshes of Zastaw to Kavenczyn. Chlopicki, the *de facto* commander-in-chief, reckoned on choosing his field of battle between Grochow and the Alder Wood; but no sooner had count Pahlen debouched, at the head of 30,000 men, from the forest of Milosna, than general Szembec, followed by the Zimirski division, attacked him opposite Waver. Instead of an ordinary engagement it was a desperate hand-to-hand combat that took place on the verge of the forest. The Russians were driven back again and again into the forest, until Rosen coming up to their assistance with thirty pieces of cannon, the assailants were forced to fall back on Grochow, favoured in their retreat by general Krukowiecki.

The next day, February 20, the Polish army, which had lost but a quarter of a mile of ground, had on its right flank the Vistula, and the Alder Wood on its left. Behind it was Warsaw, which offered it an asylum, but it was horrible to think that in case of disaster an army of 45,000 men would have only one bridge over which to effect its retreat. Victory was for Poland a matter of necessity.

Diebitsch sought to carry the Alder Wood, which was the key of the position. It was held by Skrzynecki and Gielgud's

brigade, which occupied the skirt of the wood. Rosen came up with six regiments of infantry, supported by thirty-six pieces of cannon, crowning the Dombrowa Gora summits. The fight began man to man with the bayonet. Rosen's grenadiers entering the wood were thrice driven out, and the open ground on the outskirts was covered with the dead. Count Witt's cavalry came up to support them, but the Polish artillery, spreading into a crescent, poured a cross fire upon it, routed it, and separated it by a line of gore from the Russian grenadiers, who could no longer retreat or advance.

Surprised and furious at seeing his troops decimated by an enemy so inferior in numbers, Diebitsch put an end to the engagement, and resolved to await the arrival of prince Szachoskoï, whom he had left in the rear. The plain was strewn with dead; there were Russian regiments which the grape had reduced to the number of a battalion; the two armies concluded a truce of three hours to bury their dead; but exhausted with fatigue after a carnage of thirty-six hours, they prolonged the truce for three days. Prince Szachoskoï, whose march the commander-in-chief had been unable to stop, arrived at Nieporent on the 23rd of February, after passing the Narew without obstacle.

Daybreak on the 25th beheld both armies ranged in order of battle. Forty-five thousand Poles confronted more than one hundred thousand Russians. Silence prevailed in both camps. The Polish generals held a council of war in a cabin; but the odds were too great, and they were filled with discouragement. Chlopicki, despairing of the salvation of his country, shed tears of rage. Meanwhile the generals of each division were at their posts. Skrzynecki's division, reinforced by the *faucheurs*,\* occupied the centre. Szembec was on the right, in possession of Grochow, and protected by the marshes of the Vistula. On the left wing Zimirski occupied the Alder Wood.

At nine in the morning the battle began along the whole line. Diebitsch strove at any cost to get possession of the Alder Wood, the key to the position. Chlopicki sent orders to defend it to the last extremity. Zimirski's division fought there with desperate determination, and

\* Infantry armed with a weapon peculiar to Poland, resembling a scythe blade set straight upon its handle.



he himself was mortally wounded. At last, by force of men and cannon, the field-marshal made himself master of the wood, planted his artillery there, and attacked the second line of the Poles, commanded by Skrzynecki. That general received orders to repulse the Russians and recover the wood. Chlopicki came to his assistance, and both putting themselves at the head of the grenadiers, they charged into the right side of the wood, and drove out the Lithuanians at the bayonet point, who, retreating in disorder, threw the whole army into alarm and confusion. This was the precise moment for a charge of cavalry. Chlopicki sent orders to that effect to general Lubienski, but the latter refused to obey. Maddened and desperate, Chlopicki dashed into the midst of the enemy, and replied to the aides-de-camp who applied to him for orders, "Go and ask Radzivil; as for me, I seek but death." He was soon unhorsed by a shell, and was secretly carried off from the field of battle; but the news of his wound was spread through the army and filled it with consternation.

Meanwhile the field-marshal had put all his reserves in motion; prince Szachoskoï, who had been fighting all the morning at Bialolenka, baffled the experience of the veteran Krukowiecki, deceived him as to his manœuvres, and leaving his rear-guard to keep the Polish general in play, at length effected his junction with Diebitsch. Surrounded by a battery of forty pieces of cannon, that poured a murderous slanting fire upon his ranks, Skrzynecki retreated and abandoned the wood. Diebitsch then brought up his 15,000 cavalry, who charged into the plain, preceded by fifty-eight pieces of flying artillery. The Polish infantry had rallied, and now presented a fresh front, which remained impenetrable to the hulans; but the Szembec division, unable to resist the impetuous charge of the hussars, gave way and fell back in good order on Praga, whilst a battalion of recruits made a dastardly retreat over the ice of the Vistula, and carried terror and dismay into Warsaw. At this moment all eyes were turned towards the north, watching for the arrival of Krukowiecki's division, which had been victorious at Bialolenka: Krukowiecki remained motionless. To add to this disaster, the approaches to Praga were choked up by multitudes of bewildered peasants, heaps of dead and dying,

and sumptuous equipages employed in the carriage of the wounded, and drenched with plebeian blood. The disorder was immense; the night had fallen, the air was filled with smoke and rent with groans. In order to unmask the batteries at the head of the bridge, Malachowski set fire to the houses of Praga, and the flames lighted up that scene of disaster, the Beresina of Poland. The women and children of Warsaw utter shrieks of despair; but workmen with axes in their hands, hurrying from the old city, in an instant break down the obstacles, clear away the rubbish, and leave the passages free. Upon this the infantry again formed in line, and checked the Russian cavalry by a well-sustained fire. The Albert cuirassiers, passing between the squares, imprudently pushed on as far as to the second Polish line. Their heavy squadrons, sinking in the mud, were soon hemmed in on all sides. Their ranks ploughed up by congreve rockets, and furiously charged by the white lancers, all that brilliant cavalry of prince Albert was annihilated, and with loud hurrahs the pikemen rushed on and struck down all who had escaped the lance and the bayonet. This terrible day was fatal to five thousand Poles, and cost the Russians the *élite* of their officers, and more than ten thousand men put *hors de combat*.

Night closed in, and the cannonade ceased. Skrzynecki and Szeźmiec were for following up the victory, and proposed to the commander-in-chief that they should fall on the Russians under cover of the darkness. Radzivil was afraid that the only bridge of Praga would be carried away by the ice. He gave orders to retreat, and crossed over to the left bank of the Vistula, whilst Diebitsch marched his army back into the forest.

The overflowing of the Vistula for a month suspended the war after the battle of Grochow; but general Dwernicki, commander of the right wing of the Polish army, had kept the field throughout February at the head of a small body of 3000 horse. Surrounded by the republicans of the army, that heroic man performed prodigies. Daring to a degree that amounted to genius, and prompt as lightning, with his 3000 soldiers he routed and dispersed 20,000. On the 14th of February he beat Geismar in the valley of Sieroczyn. On the 17th he crossed the Vistula, advanced to meet general

Kreutz in the palatinate of Sandomir, and, coming up with him in the forest of Nowawies, put him to flight. On the 2nd of March he came up with him again at Pulawy, where he cut to pieces the dragoons of prince Wurtemberg. Everywhere victorious, he went and took up his position at Zamose, in obedience to the orders of jealous superiors.

The necessity was felt at Warsaw of superseding Radzivil as incompetent, though no one had the cruelty to make a crime of his incapacity, since he himself confessed it with a modesty that ennobled his misfortune. Who was to be his successor? Count Pac, formerly aide-de-camp to Napoleon, the great mathematician Prondzynski, and Krukowiecki, were the rivals set up against Skrzynecki, now in the full lustre of his recent glory. The republicans proposed Dwernicki; but Skrzynecki prevailed, being supported by the aristocratic party of Warsaw, and being recommended by Chlopicki, whose wounds redeemed his errors. Skrzynecki continued what Chlopicki had begun.

He was a man of acute mind, accomplished in all the profligate arts of the diplomatic circles, valuing only polished manners, titles of nobility, and outward graces. He took pleasure in displaying the pomp of his office, held reviews in his open carriage, and was surrounded by a host of young exquisites, who, to please him, had adopted Parisian airs, and the language of high fashion. Imbued with that jesuitism which had crept into all the courts of Europe during the French restoration, Skrzynecki was a constant frequenter of the churches, and affected to talk of heaven in his speeches, and even in his proclamations to the army. Such a man, a congregationalist in epaulettes, and a pertinacious negotiator, was evidently not the leader befitting an armed revolution, though he possessed courage, a quick discerning eye, and military science, and was pricked on by ambition.

After a month's cessation of arms spent in attempts to come to an accommodation with Diebitsch, the commander-in-chief resolved to resume hostilities. But he preserved the most profound secrecy as to his plans. In the night of the 30th of March, whilst Warsaw was wrapt in sleep, Skrzynecki silently assembled his troops; the Praga bridge was covered with straw and crossed without noise. General Rybinski's division, supported by a brigade of cavalry,

marched towards Zomki, and arrived by daybreak on the flanks of Geismar's forces, which occupied a strong position in the forest of Waver. A thick fog overhung the country, and the Russians, supposing the enemy to be remote, were fast asleep. Before beginning the attack, Rybinski detached colonel Ramorino with part of his division into the wood. The colonel making a detour, posted himself behind the Russian entrenchments, so as to cut off their retreat. The enemy, suddenly assailed in front and in flank, had no time to recover from their confusion, for scarcely had Rybinski's infantry opened their fire, when the lancers, sallying from the barriers of Grochow, fell upon Geismar's advanced posts and routed them. His ranks were all in disorder, and all his efforts to rally his battalions were fruitless. The Russians thought to escape by the road to Minsk, but they fell in with Ramorino, who charged the surprised and panic-stricken fugitives at the point of the bayonet. The rout was then complete: Geismar's corps were half destroyed or made prisoners, and the Russian general fled with the remains of his forces through the wood to Dembewilkie.

Rosen's division was posted there, 15,000 strong, in a position protected by woods, and favoured by the sloughy nature of the ground, which was impracticable for cavalry and artillery. But it was still daylight, and though he could only come at Rosen by the narrow ground afforded by the high road, the commander-in-chief gave orders to take possession of the village of Dembewilkie, situated in an open glade on the side of the main road, which it commands. Though unable to reply to the Russian artillery, the 4th and 8th regiments of the line gallantly advanced, in defiance of a tremendous fire and repeated charges of the enemy. Two pieces were at length brought up with immense exertion, and about evening the 4th regiment charged into the village. General Skarzynski's cavalry and the Posen squadrons then came up by the defile, passed the village, charged the enemy's centre, and bore down his infantry and his hulans. The Russians abandoned the field of battle, with the loss of 2000 men killed, twelve pieces of cannon, innumerable arms, and 6000 prisoners. The Poles had lost but 300 men. The next day Lubinski hotly pursued Rosen through the towns of Minsk and Kaluszyn, and increased the number of prisoners



to 11,000. Skrzynecki had not the skill to turn his advantages to good account, or to make up by the audacity of his movements for the want of numbers: he was accused of indecision, and in fact he did not know how much might have been made of the enthusiasm of the victorious Poles, and the discouragement of the Russians, who seemed to be delivered into his hands by the incapacity of Diebitsch. The Russian troops were so disheartened by the unexpected reverses they had sustained, that being attacked on the 10th of April at the village of Iganie by general Prondzynski, they disbanded; and the flower of the Russian infantry, those whom the emperor called ever since the Turkish war *the lions of Varna*, laid down their arms, tore the eagles from their schakos, and fled or surrendered.

The victory of Iganie, in which the Russians lost 2500 men and some pieces of cannon, did not produce all the results that might have been expected, on account of the slowness of the generalissimo to execute the movement agreed on. Prondzynski expected every moment to see him approaching from Siedlce through Bohimie, according to the plan they had arranged together. It would have been all over with Rosen's corps, if, instead of losing invaluable time in repairing the Kostrzyn bridges, Skrzynecki had sooner debouched from the forest; he would have cut off the Russians' retreat and destroyed a whole division.

But a more terrible disaster than war was about to inflict its ravages on the Poles. The cholera morbus was on its march from India. To the north it had advanced into Siberia; to the south it had spread as far as the coasts of New Holland; eastwards, it had crossed the great wall of China, and showed itself in Pekin; westwards, passing over the Caspian Sea, it had infected Tiflis and New Georgia, crossed the Caucasus, entered the Russian empire, and broken forth in Moscow; and Diebitsch's soldiers carried it with them. It was at the battle of Iganie that the Poles contracted this frightful malady: it began with the regiments that had been most engaged, and soon spread to the rest of the troops. It was as though the mortality of battles was not enough to satisfy the mutual rancour of the belligerents.

Since Dwernicki was in occupation of Zamosc, the nobility of Volhynia, Podolia, and the Ukraine, encouraged by his

vicinity, were preparing a vast insurrection, the generous intention of which extended even to the emancipation of the serfs. To urge on this great movement, to methodise it, and to support the patriotism of those regions covered with forests and inhabited by rude hunters, was the task given Dwernicki to accomplish with his small band, which was so weak, that to give him such orders seemed equivalent to dooming him to destruction.

Be this as it may, resolved to pass through the three armies that menaced him, Dwernicki set out from Zamose on the 3rd of April, and arrived on the 16th at Boremel, where he speedily encountered Rüdiger's corps. One of those engagements ensued which nothing but Polish fury can explain. Leaving his infantry in the village, Dwernicki, with 2000 republican cavalry, dashed at Rüdiger's 9000 men: with two charges he put them to the rout, and captured eight pieces of cannon. The next day Dwernicki directed his march to Podolia, pursued by Rüdiger, who had effected a junction with Kaysarof. At noon, general Roth advanced to bar his way. The Polish general learned, at Kolodno, that it was intended to cut him off from the frontiers of Galicia. He pushed on to Lulince; but on the night of the 25th of April, Rüdiger, violating the Austrian territory, ordered a detachment to place itself in the rear of the Poles. On the morning of the 27th, when the fog cleared off that concealed the manoeuvres of the Russians, Dwernicki saw himself surrounded by 25,000 men. He then crossed the frontier; but the Austrian troops, which had tolerated the violation of their territory by the Russians, surrounded him and forced him to lay down his arms. The inhabitants of the place, which the little band passed through as prisoners, received them with enthusiasm; the ladies of Presburg plucked the buttons from Dwernicki's uniform, and hung them with gold chains from their necks.

Dwernicki's disaster frustrated the insurrection of the southern provinces. That of the Lithuanians thenceforth attracted all the attention of the Poles.

Skrzynecki lost precious time after the battle of Iganie. He might, with his whole combined force, have fallen successively on each of the grand divisions of the Russian army, which were always at a considerable distance from each

other, and have beaten them separately, from his superiority both in valour and in numbers.

The Russian guard was in cantonments between the Bug and the Narew, twenty leagues to the north of Diebitsch's head-quarters. It occupied the ground extending from Lomza to Zambrow, and Diebitsch could only join it by passing the Bug. The guard, 20,000 strong, was commanded by the grand-duke Michael, and contained the *élite* of the Russian nobility. Its destruction would have been a mortal blow to the emperor of Russia, and would have exposed him to the hatred of the already malcontent great families. This corps was, therefore, the first which the Polish generalissimo should have attacked, the more because in marching to give it battle he might have thrown succour into insurgent Lithuania.

Skrzynecki had lost a month in tergiversations: he resolved to act at last. On the 12th of May he quitted his camp at Kaluszyn, and marched on Serock, a town situate at the confluence of the Bug and the Narew. He had with him 46,000 men and a hundred pieces of cannon.\* In order to mask this great movement from Diebitsch, he left general Uminski at Kaluszyn with a few troops.

Having arrived at Serock on the 14th, without anything having transpired as to his designs, either in the Russian army or in Warsaw itself, Skrzynecki divided his army into two columns, and throwing himself into the ground enclosed between the two rivers, he marched against the guards, having the Bug on his right and the Narew on his left. One of the columns, under the command of Lubinski, moved in the direction of Nur, to observe Diebitsch, and hinder him from crossing the Bug. The other, under the orders of Skrzynecki himself, marched on Lomza to surprise the guards, menacing Ostrolenka on its left, a small town on the left bank of the Narew, and surrounded by sands and marshes.

The town was occupied by a division of 7000 men, under the command of Sacken, who was thus parted from the Rus-

\* His forces had been considerably augmented since the commencement of the war. They amounted in all, at this period, to about 86,000 men.

sian guard by the whole distance between Ostrolenka and Lomza.

Instead of passing by Sacken's corps, which could afterwards have been destroyed in its isolated position, and which was kept in check by a Polish division previously sent forward to the right bank, Skrzynecki committed the mistake of detaching general Gielgud against Sacken, whereby he at once weakened the Poles and forced Sacken's Russians to fall back on Lomza and rejoin the guards. Already, moreover, the guards, profiting by Skrzynecki's tardiness, had gained a march, and placed the river between them and the enemy.

The expedition against the guards failed, therefore, for want of vigour and audacity. Diebitsch at length received information of these great movements. He might have marched on Warsaw, and effected a formidable diversion: he preferred going to the support of the guards. He left his camp at Siedlee in haste, and with as much promptitude on this occasion as he was usually slow, he advanced to the Bug, crossed it above Nur, and attacked Lubinski in the plain. Lubinski, at the head of his 10,000 men, bravely sustained the assault until evening. Hemmed in by count Witt's cavalry he refused to surrender, forced a passage through the enemy's ranks at the point of the bayonet, whilst the *faucheurs* mowed down the Russian cavalry, and escaping under cover of darkness effected his junction with the generalissimo. The latter, hearing cannon in the direction of Nur, was already falling back on Ostrolenka; and on the night of the 25th he passed the Narew, over the two bridges of that town, with the bulk of his army and all his artillery, avoiding a battle, but by some inexplicable mistake leaving Lubinski's corps unsupported on the left bank.

Meanwhile the guards, recovering from the alarm, and finding the ground clear between the two rivers, had effected their junction with Diebitsch, and on the morning of the 26th the whole Russian army advanced on Ostrolenka.

In front of the town extends a plain, interspersed as we have said with sands, marshes, and some wooded hillocks. Here Lubinski's cavalry deployed, awaiting the Russians, behind general Kaminski's division of infantry.

At nine in the morning the great Russian army arrived



*en masse* in the plain, spreading out like a fan, and flanked by clouds of Cossacks. The affair was begun by the troops of general Berg, which were vigorously received by Kaminski's infantry. But as the vast numbers of the Russians threatened to hem in the whole Polish body, it was forced to abandon the ground. The cavalry first fell back on Ostrolenka, and general Pac ordered it to cross over to the right bank. It was followed by Kaminski's infantry. The 4th regiment of the line brought up the rear, and fell back slowly; stopping from time to time to repulse the Russian cavalry, which poured like a deluge upon it, it fired from all its fronts, and reached Ostrolenka, whilst the troops, whose retreat it covered, hurried through the town to the two bridges to join the bulk of the Polish army encamped in perfect security on the right bank.

But the Russians entered on the heels of the rear-guard at several points. Disorder began. Unfinished barricades obstructed the streets; shells burst in every direction, and the houses of Ostrolenka were in flames: the fight continued in the midst of the conflagration. Whilst the Poles were debouching by all the issues towards the bridges, the grenadiers of Astrakhan, already posted in the houses adjoining the river, fired at point-blank distance on the retreating battalions. The Russians, mingled with Poles, choked up the avenues and planted their batteries on the bank of the river.

The 4th regiment, left alone in the town, had to cut its way through this dense multitude. It closed its ranks, and with loud hurrahs charged the human mass at the point of the bayonet, made an awful carnage, and cleared a passage to the bridge, leaving it piled with dead. Nothing was seen on the surface of the blood-red Narew but the dead or the dying.

It is eleven in the forenoon. The Astrakhan and Suvarof grenadiers rush headlong on the crazy bridges in pursuit of the 4th regiment of the line. The Polish cannoniers, after repeatedly sweeping the bridge, have been one by one picked off by sharpshooters, and stretched dead by their guns. It is round these pieces that the fight rages on the right bank. The Russians are protected by the fire of eighty guns, which the curve of the river enables them to range in

a horse-shoe form on the left bank. Suddenly the generalissimo arrives in wild dismay among the Poles. A moment before, quiet and unsuspecting in his head-quarters, he thought he heard the noise of a common engagement. The troops seated round their bivouac fires had not eaten for thirty hours. On learning that the Russian army is assailing the right bank, all assemble tumultuously; the battalions rush to meet the enemy without order or concert. Skrzynecki gallops like a madman from column to column, shouting, "Ho! Rybinski! Malachowski! Forward! forward, all!" Himself, with his coat torn with balls, rushes towards the bridge, from which fresh masses are every moment issuing; and taking his battalions one after the other, he plunges them into the mêlée. The generals set the example; Langemann, Pac, Muchowski, and Prondzynski execute furious but ineffectual charges; the Polish artillery has soon spent its ammunition; the battery of colonel Bem alone carries death into the ranks of the enemy. The battle is fought man to man, with swords and pikes. A sort of frenzy seizes the Poles. Hundreds of officers are seen rushing to the front, sword in hand, singing the Warsaw hymn. The lancers attempt to charge in their turn, and the generalissimo urges them on at full speed; but their horses sink up to the breast in the plashy soil, and they are exterminated without striking a blow.

Night began to fall: the field of battle was now but a vast cemetery. Skrzynecki had succeeded in preventing the Russian army from passing over wholly to the right bank. He remained master of the field: but it had cost him 7000 men. Generals Kicki and Kaminski were slain, 270 officers had fallen. The Russians recrossed the Narew during the night, having lost more than 10,000 men. The Polish generalissimo gave orders to retreat to Warsaw, and as he stepped into his carriage with Prondzynski, he repeated sadly the famous words of Kosciusko, *Finis Poloniae*.

Shutting himself up in the camp of Poltusk, whither the cholera had pursued him, Diebitsch sank into a profound melancholy. No longer doubting the loss of his master's favour, he sought oblivion of his losses and humiliations in intoxication. He died on the 11th of June, and his death was almost immediately followed by that of the grand-duke

Constantine. Both have been attributed to poison administered by the emperor's most trusted confidant, count Orloff; but this is nothing more than a conjecture, not only unsupported by a tittle of evidence, but even at variance with probability.

Meanwhile, from the depths of Russia incessantly poured forth new masses of troops. The Russian army, 70,000 strong, with 300 cannon, had passed under the command of field-marshal Paskievitch, of Erivau, the conqueror of the Persians. Renouncing the idea of attacking Warsaw on the right bank, where it was defended by the suburb Praga, and by the river itself, this daring man formed the project of transporting his line of operations to the other side of the Vistula. His plan was to march towards the Prussian frontier, where additional succours of every description awaited him, to cross the Vistula at Oziek, and to return and attack Warsaw on the left bank.

After passing Warsaw, the river continues its course towards the north for about five leagues, as far as Modlin, a fortified town, then occupied by the Poles. At this place it makes an elbow, turning sharp round to the west; and here receives the Bug and the Narew, which, just before united into a single stream, throw themselves into it by one mouth. Modlin, then, was a fortress, whence the Poles were to command the new theatre of war. But the resolution of the field-marshal was taken, and on the 4th of July the Russian army was put in motion. Divided into four columns, it was ordered to execute a parallel march, turning round Modlin, as round a pivot, the column nearest that fortress having directions to advance slowly, in order that the column at the extremity of the radius might have time to accomplish its movement. This march was in the highest degree rash and dangerous. The soldiers had to make their way over a country ploughed up by the heavy rains, and intersected in every direction with rivers and torrents. Worn out by the heaviness of the way, encumbered by their baggage, their large park of artillery, and the immense train requisite for the transport of twenty days' victualling for such an army, pursued, moreover, by the cholera, which strewed the road with dead and dying, the various divisions dragged on their painful march, exhausted, broken up, dispersed. Had an

army of 40,000 men, debouching from Modlin, fallen upon these disordered masses, there is every probability that Paskievitch would have been utterly overwhelmed, that Poland would have been saved. A corps of Polish cavalry, sent out as a reconnoitring party, proved, indeed, the extreme probability of such a result, by the entire confusion which it threw into the Russian army, by driving in Ataman's Cossacks.

But, tranquil on the left bank, Skrzynecki occupied himself and his troops with the celebration of mass. "Battle! battle!" vociferated the troops with enthusiastic energy, each time that the general passed before their ranks; but headstrong, inflexible, he merely smiled or shrugged his shoulders. What mystery lurked beneath this conduct? Did the hero of Dobro, of Grochow, of Waver, of Dembewilkie, wish to draw the Russians over to the left bank, in the hope of crushing beneath the walls of Warsaw the formidable field-marshal, then cut off from all communication with Russia, and inextricably involved in the disasters of an impossible retreat? But to seize the victory which offered itself was surely better than to await it under circumstances; to postpone it until it was, as he might deem complete, was to render it uncertain. So thought the generals, so thought the soldiers, compelled to inactivity. Loud and general clamour arose; and well it might, for Paskievitch, in the mean time, had crossed the river on floating bridges, the materials for which had been prepared by Prussia at Thorn, and his army was now advancing in compact array to swallow up devoted Warsaw. The clamour now became universal; murderous riots broke out in Warsaw, and Krukowiecki, their alleged instigator, was appointed dictator on the 16th of August.

On the 19th of August, Krukowiecki assembled a council of war, which, of all the measures proposed to it, most decisively rejected that which was at once the boldest, and the only practicable one, namely, that suggested by the dictator himself, which was, to give battle under the walls of Warsaw with the entire force at the disposition of the government. Uminski proposed to detach one half of the army by the right bank of the river into Podlachia to victual the capital, and render it capable of a long defence. Dembinski suggested that the whole army should abandon Warsaw, and transport itself into



Lithuania, crushing on its way the small corps of Rosen and Golowin. These two latter plans were evidently only admissible after the first had been tried. For, after they had given battle there would be ample time for them, in the event of defeat, to entrench themselves in the city, to victual it from the right bank, to arm the people, to barricade the streets, and to renew the immortal defence of Saragossa. As to the proposition of Dembinski, it was only worthy of consideration as a forlorn hope, as a last resource, after the failure of everything else. The plan adopted was that of Uminski; a most fatal selection, for it sent away one entire half of an army, already far too weak, on the preposterous mission of procuring, a full fortnight before they were wanted, additional provisions for a city, whose greatest danger at that moment was, not famine, but assault.

Accordingly, Ramorino was despatched with 20,000 men and forty-two pieces of cannon into Podlachia, and Lubinski, with a detachment of 4000 men into the palatinate of Plock, so that there remained for the defence of the capital only 35,000 men. On learning that the Polish army was thus broken up, Paskievitch decided upon attempting an assault, and fixed the 6th of September for that purpose. His forces had just been increased by a new army of 30,000 men, which general Kreutz had brought. Thus the capital of Poland was menaced at different points by a total mass of 120,000 men and 386 cannon! The effective of the Polish army was about 80,000 men and 144 cannon, but there were at the present moment in Warsaw only 35,000 men and 136 pieces of artillery. The city was defended on the left bank by three semicircular lines of vallations, the most extended of which did not embrace less than five leagues. The principal sallies were Wola, Pariz, and Marymont, connected together by lunettes. This immense development, to be adequately maintained, required an army three times as large as that of the Poles. Certain points, of necessity insufficiently manned, must, as a matter of course, fall into the hands of Paskievitch, so that they had built forts for the enemy, and the very works which were intended to stop the besieger, became an additional element of success at his disposition. To complete this misfortune, the points the best fortified were precisely those which the Russians could not attack. Krukowiecki had conceived the idea of

embodying the male population of the suburbs, and Zalewski, the celebrated chief of the ensigns, had succeeded in organising an urban guard of more than 20,000 men, the staff of which was formed of the unemployed officers; but Chrzanowski, by spreading an alarm of another night of the 15th of August, obtained the dissolution of this formidable militia. Thus everything conspired to bring about the fall of Warsaw; each step that Poland made towards her ruin, corresponded with the progressive enfeeblement of the democratic principle.

Before commencing the attack, Paskievitch wished to attempt an arrangement, and general Berg presented himself for this purpose at the outposts, where he had an interview with Prondzynski; but the council of ministers and Krucowicki himself having declared that they would only treat on the basis of a manifesto, which was equivalent to a rupture, the field-marshal ordered the attack for the next day, the 6th September, and prepared his troops for it by distributing among them enormous rations of brandy. For the Russians, though good soldiers, well able to endure fatigue, and obedient unto death, are deficient in the impetuous energy requisite for so terrible an assault as this was to be.

At daybreak the Russians opened a fire from two hundred cannon. Muravief and Strantmann advanced to attack Uminski, and at the same moment the columns of Kreutz and Lüders, debouching from the centre, threw themselves upon the entrenchments to the left of Wola, and carried two redoubts; but as they were taking possession of battery 54, lieutenant Gordon fired the powder magazine, and blew up himself with the enemy. Wola was then attacked from behind by the victorious troops, and in front by the general of Pahlen's corps, who hurried their drunken soldiers on to the assault, after having battered the walls with a hundred and fifteen pieces of heavy artillery. Assailed from all points at once, the garrison of Wola, too feeble to resist such a mighty attack, retreated, and entrenched themselves in the church, where their old commandant, Sowinski, made them swear upon the cross never to surrender. The place was soon forced, and the soldiers put to death, Sowinski himself falling, pierced with wounds, upon the altar.

Masters of Wola, the Russians planted their artillery there, and marched from it towards noon, under cover of the fire of a hundred cannon, to attack the second line,

which, resting on the suburb of Czyste, was covered at the point of assault by forty pieces of cannon under the direction of the deputy, Roman Soltyk, and of general Bem, that incomparable artillery officer, who had been so fatal to Diebitsch at the battle of Ostrolenka. On seeing the Russians debouch from the fort, the general directed his artillery and poured in a terrible fire, overthrowing horse and foot, and clearing the ground quite up to the entrenchments of Wola, which Soltyk inundated with shells and projectiles. The generalissimo Malachowski, seizing the opportunity, pushed forward two battalions of the 4th regiment of the line to retake Wola; and a fierce struggle commenced at the foot of the fort, bristling with cannon, and defended by a body of infantry double the number of the assailants, and which was reinforced by four battalions of grenadiers. Thrice these masses fell upon the two Polish battalions, and each time they were driven back to the fort, by one of those charges at the point of the bayonet which have immortalised the 4th regiment of the line. The enemy at length found itself compelled to send the squadrons of Chilkoff against them, and the two battalions, not being supported, fell back in good order upon the suburb of Czyste. The Russians remained masters of the first line, of which they occupied the chief points.

The battle began with a cannonade, in which the Russians had the superiority in number of pieces and the Poles in skill. Three hundred and fifty pieces thundered together. To facilitate the principal attack made by Kreutz and Pahlen's corps on the suburb of Czyste, Muravief received orders to march against Uminski, who commanded the left of the Poles, by the barriers of Jerusalem. The seventy-third battery, under colonel Przedpeiski, placed on a salient lunette, played aslant on the Russian artillery acting against Czyste, disabled the enemy's pieces, and swept all before it. Muravief wished to drive the colonel's artillery from its position. Two columns of infantry, commanded by general Witt in person, advanced along the two flanks of the Raszyn causeway leading to the Jerusalem gate. The Polish grenadiers, without waiting for the enemy to come up, rushed on their columns, already broken by the discharges of grape, and made a great carnage. As they were rallying, Uminski sent the blue lancers and the squadrons of Sandomir to charge them in

flank, and they were driven back upon their batteries. But a brigade of the cavalry of the Russian guard hastened to their aid, and drove the Poles back to their lines, but there it suffered its imprudent ardour to carry it too far. It was mowed down by the fire of the Poles, and but thirty horses were left out of the two Russian regiments. Fresh masses of cavalry attempted to carry the seventy-third battery, but the cannon made havoc in their ranks, and they retreated full gallop.

Whilst this formidable battery was occupied with its own defence, Kreutz and Pahlen refitted their damaged pieces, and recommenced the attack on Czyste, which was the salient point of the second line.

Their columns marched resolutely over the ground swept by their artillery, and they carried two batteries. Assailed on all sides by Pahlen's troops, which stole along under cover of the houses and garden walls, the twenty-third battery, commanded by colonel Romanski, sustained a desperate conflict. Romanski was killed. He and Bem were the ablest officers of artillery in the two armies.

It was five in the afternoon. The Czyste faubourg had been set on fire by a shower of shells, and the flames lighted up the streets strewed with dead. The gardens and enclosures became the scenes of partial conflicts, in which the combatants fought almost man to man. The 4th regiment of the line, entrenched in the cemetery, made a furious defence, but was soon driven from beneath the wall of the toll-house by the spread of the conflagration. General Nabakoff, and the grenadiers led by Szachoskoï himself, advance as far as the barrier of Wola, seek a passage through the flames, and become entangled in a labyrinth of lanes, ditches, and parapets. On reaching the cross ways, their ranks were there swept by four pieces of cannon, planted at the end of the alley. The murderous conflict continued far into the night. That day the people of Warsaw were disarmed, and the mobs were dispersed! The streets of the city were silent and deserted; all eyes were turned towards Praga, whence the 20,000 men under Ramorino, so cruelly backward, were every moment expected. At nine in the evening the army received news of the capitulation, with orders to retire on Praga.



## CHAPTER LXVIII.

## CRUELITIES INFLICTED ON THE POLES—PERSECUTION OF THE UNITED GREEK CHURCH—MARTYRDOM OF THE NUNS OF MINSK.

POLAND now lay bleeding at the feet of Nicholas, and fearful was his vengeance. The vanquished were treated as criminals; patriotism and independence, virtues which we should rejoice to see possessed by the Russians, were imputed as crimes to the Poles. Siberia, the Caucasus, and the army, were filled with these unhappy beings; Poland was incorporated with Russia, and, contrary to all treaties, became a province of that empire. Every species of punishment was inflicted; and neither property nor the ties of family were respected.

In one government, that of Podolia, an order was given to transplant five hundred families (twenty-five or thirty thousand souls) of *amnestied* insurgents, or of *suspected* persons; an order to transplant them to the frontier of the Caucasus, to the uncultivated and miasmatic lands, within a stone's throw of the enemy. The reply of the governor of Podolia is interesting. There exist, says he, three classes of nobles: 1. The noble proprietors. 2. The noble servants, labourers, and workmen; and 3. The nobles of towns, tradesmen, advocates, &c. It is most essential not to be restricted to the first, but to take from the other two, "to rid the country of such persons." This execrable appeal to imperial ferocity was perfectly understood. In his letter of the 6th (18th) of April, 1832, the minister of the interior replies, that his majesty has sanctioned these regulations, *adding with his own hand*, they are to serve not only for Podolia, but for *all the western governments*, care being taken only to send those persons who were capable of work; their families could be sent later.

So they are to go alone, separated from all belonging to them; the wife and the children stay to die of hunger in Poland, and the husband departs to meet his death in the Caucasus.

Finally, the emperor adds, that the nobles of the second class, not proprietors, shall be placed apart, *enrolled among the Cossacks*, without intercourse with the colonies of their countrymen.

These fearful regulations were not merely transitory; they still serve as the basis of fixed measures which make humanity shudder. For the French conscription, which drew the men by lot, has been substituted the horror of Russian recruitments, in which the men are arbitrarily chosen according to the humour of their masters and the imperial agents. It is needless to say how little those suspected of *Polandism* are spared in this operation. Thus chosen, they march to the Caucasus, whence, according to the avowal of Paskievitch, *they never return*. By this means, Russia has established a kind of horrid issue, out of which runs the best blood of Poland, her manhood and her strength. The worst rigours of this system have fallen upon the second class, that of the noble peasants, a body essentially military, and which, more than the citizens of towns, forms the real middle class in Poland. In the first place, they were lowered to the rank of the *soi-disant* free peasants of Russia (*odnodvortzi*): then a means was found of making them pay four times for once the tax of blood. All other classes of Russian subjects undergo recruitment only every two years, but they every year. Others furnish five men in a thousand, they furnish ten. Thus their burden is quadrupled.

The ordinance of 1832, which alone remained to Poland, was soon infringed by the emperor himself. In the following year, he undertook the entire transformation of the country. For the Polish division of palatinates, he substituted the Russian division of governments; for the decimal and *métrique* division, followed by the Poles, the Russian weights and measures; for the modern calendar of common sense and of science, the old Julian calendar. Lastly, he has tried to efface the Polish language! suppressing it in the different administrations, dismissing those functionaries who were unacquainted with Russian, commanding the use of the Russian language in the Polish schools, forbidding the youth to speak their own native tongue! Several students of Wilna met secretly to speak the Polish language.

Surprised, and carried off, bound to the tails of the Cossacks' horses, behold them soldiers for life!\*

It was in the month of March, 1832, during the emperor's most violent fury, that he commanded the transplantation of so many families. Then it was that he caused to be SEIZED (that is the word used by the council of administration) all the male children, vagabonds, orphans, *and poor*, from seven to sixteen years of age. The order came direct by the aide-de-camp Tolstoï. Paskievitch, in his regulations, expresses himself differently; by means of two letters he changes the whole sense—a change he would not have made without the authority of the emperor. He says *OR*, and not *and*; he says orphans *OR* poor; a most cruel distinction, because from that moment might be taken away children who, though *not orphans*, belonged to poor parents. The government of Warsaw, in publicly posting this cruel order, added, with the view to soften and mitigate the public fermentation, these words foreign to the text: Those children having *no place of abode*. In reality, the *children of poor parents* were not the less seized, in spite of the violent and terrible protestations of their parents.

\* "This strikes me as the most outrageous of enterprises, the most barbarous and unnatural cruelty. Our language, our mother tongue, dear to every one of us, that which recalls to us, in its every word and its every sound, the voice of our country, and which affords us all the sweet emotions of our life, our homes of childhood, and our time of love. . . . Tear it from our hearts, and you tear our hearts in the effort. It seems to me that what remains the most treasured in our remembrance, of those whom we have loved and lost for ever, more than their features, more than their expression, more than their gestures, is the sound of their household words. That which I have the most remembered of my father, with whom I lived during forty-eight years of my life, is the tone of his voice. . . . I start when I think that he is still beside me, that he speaks to me and says, 'My son!' Yes, all our heart is in our native tongue—friendship, love, country. Each of the great nations has inherited the best part of itself in its language and its voice. The heroic Polish tongue, all vibrating with manly tones, causes even him who understands not the meaning of the words to feel the majesty of the ancient republic; it brings before the beating heart all the glory of her history. One hears the noble voice of heroes. The Russian language has a very agreeable sound, sweet and caressing. It resembles the melodious language of the South. Inflict it upon Poland, and you change the national character in a most serious point—you render it weak and effeminate."—*Michelet*.

It was a most fearful scene. After several convoys of children had been carried off by night, on the 17th of May, 1832, one was sent off in the daytime. The mothers ran after the waggons, tearing their breasts; several threw themselves under the wheels, and were only driven away with stripes. On the 18th, another multitude of little children, who worked or sold in the streets, were seized. On the 10th, the parish schools were emptied. These poor little things, so carried off, died like insects throughout the whole journey. When they were too weak to go on, they were left to die by the road-side. The bodies of these little innocents were found by the country people; near them lay their bread, which they had not had strength enough to touch.

The emperor had just discovered (what had been known from all time) that the Jews of Poland, excluded from all honest industry, lived by smuggling and second-hand dealing. An order was issued to transport them, without loss of time, to the extremity of Russia. Never had there been such desolation since the ruin of Jerusalem. No delay. The Cossacks arrive—the goods are in the streets. “Clear off! March! Go you must, that is the order.—Not a day, not an hour.” Old men, women, young children, depart; they drag themselves along, the soldiers press behind and goad them at need. They fall from weariness and hunger. There they are left helplessly to die, like so many dogs. The wife may faint and die, but the husband must march on. Is this enough? No. The survivors, in their new habitations, see the beginning of another murderous persecution, the *conscription of their children!* At six years old they are carried off for the military or naval service. All these children die. The Jew cannot exist as a soldier.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century a large body in the Greek church separated itself from the orthodox or state establishment, and under the name of the Uniate, or United Greek Church, entered into communion with Rome, placing itself under the spiritual supremacy of the pope, in opposition to that of the patriarch, and afterwards of the sovereign. This schism struck the deepest root in Lithuania and modern Poland; and, since the partition of the empire, has had powerful political influence in keeping



up the feeling of Polish nationality; the Uniate Church and national fidelity being held as synonymous, while the Polish adherent to the Russo-Greek or orthodox church was generally assumed to be an apostate to his faith, and a traitor to his country. It was therefore a matter of great importance to the czar to destroy this schismatic branch, and it was done. The process was very simple: the villages were surrounded, and the priests, after receiving the knout, were carried off. The Russian priest, whip in hand, passed in review the trembling flock, threatening them, lashing them. The obstinate were shut up in heated rooms filled with the smoke of green wood. Grace soon operated upon them by means of suffocation. All being so well agreed in the new faith, they were consigned to the church, and there the sacrament was thrust down their throats, while the whip was held over their heads. The most horrible of these *dragonades* took place out of Poland, in the military colonies established in the wastes of Russia. The unruly were sent thither, and under the pretext of military discipline, were literally crushed with blows, without even the consolation of religious martyrdom,—killed, not as Catholics, but as rebellious soldiers. Nevertheless, their conversion was triumphantly proclaimed. A visible miracle. To aid this good work, laws were passed which forbade the hearing of mass, excepting on Sundays and great festivals; which forbade the teaching of the Catholic religion to the children of Catholic parents; which prescribed the sermons that were to be preached, and the catechisms that were to be used in Catholic churches; and which allowed of no theological explanations of theological differences; which, later, dispersed the Catholic priests with violence, shut up their churches, and refused all spiritual consolations to their flocks; which excommunicated as schismatic all Catholic children not baptised according to the rules of the established church within four-and-twenty hours after their birth, and which offered entire pardon and indemnity to any Catholic convicted of any crime whatsoever—murder, robbery, no matter what—who recanted and became orthodox. So much vigorous legislation was not without its effect. In the spring of 1839 the whole of the episcopal body of the Uniate signed the act of recantation,

petitioning the emperor graciously to re-admit them into the bosom of the orthodox church, and asking pardon, both of him and of God, for their long blindness and obstinacy. The emperor deigned to grant their prayer. His official journal, in an edifying article, chants forth a pious Hosannah: "Happy union!" it exclaims, "and which has cost no tears! mildness and persuasion were alone employed!" To celebrate the incorporation of the united Greeks with the orthodox church, a medal was struck with this inscription: "Separated by violence in 1596, reunited by love in 1839."

Amongst the converted clergy, the bishop Siemaszko distinguished himself as particularly ardent in his professions of orthodoxy; and as a proof of his zeal—or as its reward—he undertook the task of converting the Basilian nuns of Minsk, of whom he had been "bishop and shepherd." He began his mission with moderation, even with kindness, calling on them affectionately, as their pastor, to renounce the communion of Rome, and the acts of St. Basil; but, as their refusals were more vehement than he had looked for, his behaviour suddenly changed; and one Friday, as the nuns were going to prayers, Siemaszko, accompanied by Uszakof, the civil governor of Minsk, and a troop of soldiers, burst open the convent gates, to offer them their final choice between honours with the orthodox religion, and constancy to their communion with forced labour in Siberia. The nuns despised his threats as they had rejected his bribes. The reverend mother, Makrena Mirazyslawski, answered generally in the name of all, and Siemaszko then ordered them, angrily, to prepare instantly for a march. With difficulty they obtained permission to offer up a few prayers before their departure. They flung themselves before the host, the renegade prelate cursing them as they prayed. Thirty-five knelt on the church flags; but, when they rose up to go, one was found dead, Rosalie Lenszeka. Her heart had broken between fear and grief.

They were marched through the town; the orphan children, of whom they had forty-seven in the convent, following them with tears and lamentations, and many of the inhabitants crowding round them, weeping too; for, according to various depositions, these nuns of St. Basil were much be-

loved. Their kindness and benevolence to the poor and the afflicted was a matter of public notoriety and of public benefit. The soldiers were afraid of a popular demonstration if they attempted any personal violence in the town, so that the nuns were not ironed until they came to their first halting-place, about a league from Minsk. There they were chained in couples, with irons on their hands and feet, and in this manner they marched for seven days, until they reached Witebsk. They were placed in a convent of Czernicks, or Black Nuns, chiefly widows of Russian soldiers; women of coarse habits and cruel feelings, to whom they were appointed servants, or rather serfs and victims. Their coupling-chains were removed; but their irons remained on their feet; and these they wore for the seven years of their persecution. At this convent—which had formerly been Basilian, and had belonged to the Uniate Church—they found thirteen of its former owners, Basilian nuns, subject to the same treatment which they themselves were about to undergo. The whole of the sisterhood united was placed under the charge of the father Ignatius Mikhailievitch, who had formerly been their own almoner, but who was now orthodox and renegade.

Before six o'clock in the morning the nuns performed the service of the house, drew the water, carried it, prepared the wood, lighted the fires, and, in short, did all that was required in the establishment. At six they went to hard labour: breaking stones and carrying them in wheelbarrows, to which they were chained. From noon to one o'clock they rested; from one till dark, hard labour again; and, after dark, household work and attending to the cattle. Then to rest, such as they might find, in a low damp room, where a few wisps of straw was their only furniture, and where their clanking irons were not removed. Their food was so scanty and so wretched that the beggars used to bring them bread, and often they shared the provender of the cattle when serving them,—a crime the Black Nuns punished with blows, telling them they did not deserve to share the food of their hogs. One of their most painful duties was cleaning the high leather boots worn by the Czernicks, with a certain preparation called “*dziegiec*,” which was overpoweringly sickening. But the poor nuns of

Minsk lived to remember their leather boots and the "dziegiec" with regret.

After two months of this life—finding them still persistent—Siemaszko ordered them to be flogged twice a week, fifty lashes each time. These floggings took place in the court-yard, under a kind of shed, in the presence of the deacons, the priests, the children, the nuns: "of everything," says the mother Makrena, "that lived and blasphemed in this dwelling." Their flesh often hung in strips from their bodies, and the way to their work was tracked with blood; but they made neither resistance nor complaint, and only wept when they did not pray. It was in the winter; and they were not allowed any fire; so that the cold froze their limbs, and poisoned their wounds, making their punishment still more severe. After one of these flagellations, a nun, Colomba Gorska, fainted on her way to work. They beat her until she recovered her senses; when, staggering to her wheelbarrow, she attempted to move it, and fell dead. Another nun, Baptista Downar, was burned alive in a large stove. The Czernicks shut her up in it after she had lighted the fire. Another, Nepomucena Grotkowska, was killed, perhaps accidentally, by the Czernick abbess, who "clove open her head, by striking it with a log of wood, because she had dared to make use of a knife to scrape from a plank a stain of tar, which she could not remove in any other way." It was a breach of discipline and disobedience to a rule of the abbess. Another nun, Susannah Rypinska, died from the flogging; and a fifth, Coletta Sielawa, was also killed *accidentally*, by a Black Nun, who broke her ribs by knocking her down violently against a pile of wood.

After they had been many months at Witebsk, Siemaszko wrote angrily to Mikhailievitch, asking why he had not been able to overcome their obstinacy. The superintendent answered that they were "soft as wax in his hands," and ready to recant, and that Siemaszko might come to receive their confession. To bring this about, and substantiate his boast, he began new tortures. They were suddenly seized, and divided into four parties, shut up in damp dungeons, and given scarcely enough to exist on. The dungeon in which the reverend mother and her eight sisters were



confined was full of worms and vermin, which crawled about their persons when they slept. Their only food was half-putrid vegetables. The other three divisions had for the first two days a pound of bran bread and a pint of water each, which was then reduced one-half. Every day Mikhailievitch attempted to induce them to recant; now with promises, and now with threats, and now with a false paper, which he asserted in turn to each party that the others had signed, and were then warm and comfortable, "enjoying their coffee." "Would it not be better," he used to say to the mother, "to be abbess again, than to be eaten alive by the worms? Come! sign, as all your children have done." The brave old woman still persisted, though trembling lest any of her nuns had given way; but, seizing the paper from his hand, she opened it, and found it a blank. Heaping reproaches on his head, she flung the false petition in his face; and this "traitor,—Judas, envoy of Lucifer,—went back to his master, quite ashamed," leaving her and her children triumphant. Siemaszko, however, arrived. He spoke to them gently, congratulated them on their decision, promised them grand honours, and appointed the mother, Makrena, mother-general of her orthodox charge. Eagerly, yet in terror lest they should find a traitor amongst them, they all denied their conversion; and the reverend mother refused her office with more energy, doubtless, than policy, flinging back the superb cross with which he wished to decorate her, telling him to wear it himself, and then "instead of, as in the old times, a thief hanging on the cross, they should see the cross hanging on a thief." Finding that he could make no impression on them, Siemaszko, indignant at the useless trouble he had taken, and the unnecessary civility he had shown, ordered them to be severely flogged beneath his own windows: and so ended this prelatie visitation.

Among other more revolting, but not more severe cruelties, was the manner in which they were made to bring water from the river. To "prevent the Polish spirit from passing into the water," the nuns were obliged to hold the heavy copper jars at arms' length. It was a great distance between the convent and the river, especially in winter, when they had to go a long way round; and the poor creatures were sometimes unable to keep the jars held out

at the required distance. If they drew them nearer, the water was polluted; and the Czernick nuns, who were always with them, armed with whips and sticks, flung it over them, and they were obliged to go back to the river for more. This happened, perhaps, many times in the day, and as they were not allowed to change their clothes—indeed they had none but what they wore—they were sometimes the whole day and night enveloped in a sheet of ice, for the water froze in the clothes instead of drying. Another misfortune which affected them more than others, that seemed more difficult to bear, was the loss of their only cooking utensil: an earthenware pot given them by a Jew, in which they used to cook the only warm food they had to eat, namely, the “braha,” the grounds of a sort of spirit made from corn. Mikhailievitch shattered it with the iron heel of his boot, and the poor nuns found all their patience and resignation necessary to enable them to bear this loss cheerfully. However, “they carried it to God,” with the same marvellous patience they showed throughout; and afterwards another Jew gave them an iron kettle.

Again Siemaszko came among them; this time to reconsecrate the old Uniate Church at Witebsk to the orthodox faith. He tried to make the nuns assist in the ceremony, which would have been equal to a public profession of faith; but they steadfastly refused, and suffered themselves to be cut, maimed, bruised, ill-treated, and wounded, rather than commit what they believed to be a mortal sin. The abbess had her head laid open, and there was not one of the nuns who was not bleeding from one or many wounds. At the church door, as they were being forced in, one of the nuns snatched a log of wood from a carpenter at work, and threw it at the bishop’s feet; and the abbess Makrena offered him a hatchet, crying, “Thou hast been our shepherd, become our executioner! Like the father of St. Barbe, destroy thy children!” the nuns kneeling before him. Siemaszko dashed the hatchet from the mother’s hands; and, in falling, it cut the leg and foot of one of the sisters. With a blow of his hand he knocked out one of Makrena’s teeth, and beat her brutally about the head. Then, perhaps from the excess and reaction of his passion, he fainted: so the barbarous scene ended. But after this their persecutions were greatly

increased, and the death of Mikhailievitch, who fell, when drunk, into a pool and was drowned, only added to their sorrows; for the pope Swanow, who succeeded, continually blamed his moderation, and repeated daily, "I am no Mikhailievitch!"

At the end of 1840, two years after their arrival at Witebsk, they were suddenly marched off to Polosk. By this time their clothes were completely worn out, and they received a fresh supply; namely, two petticoats of sacking, and a half square of linen for the head. This was all they had. At Polosk they found other Basilian nuns, whose persecutions had begun at the same time as that of the nuns of Witebsk, and who had lost fifteen, out of their former number of twenty-five, from the barbarities they had suffered. Of the remaining ten, two were mad, who yet were chained, fastened to the wheelbarrows, and compelled to work like the rest. One died soon after the arrival of the nuns of Minsk, and the other was one day found covered with blood, lying dead on the floor of the prison. In Polosk, or rather at Spas, which is about a league from the town, the nuns were set to work on a palace about to be built for Siemaszko. They first had to break the stones, not with hammers, but with the stones themselves, which dislocated their arms, so that they were often obliged to help each other to replace them in the sockets; tumours came on their necks and heads, their hands were swollen, chapped, and bleeding, and their bodies were one mass of open wounds and festering sores. At night they could not lie down nor sleep, and often passed the whole night leaning against each other, weeping and praying. Their numbers were sadly thinned during this period. It might be truly said that they moistened the foundations of that prelatie palace with their blood. Three died in eight days; two of over-fatigue; and the third, too weak to guide a bucket of lime, which she was drawing up to the third story, let the rope slip through her hands, and the bucket, falling on her head, crushed her to death. Five were buried alive in an excavation they were making for potters' earth. The pit was very deep, and cracks and crevices had already warned them there was danger; but the papas (priests) would not allow any precautions to be taken, and the bank giving way,

buried them as they worked, without an attempt being made to save them. Nine other nuns died by the falling of a wall they were building. The mother herself escaped only by the fortunate accident of exchanging her own labour (she was up on the scaffolding with the rest) for the harder task of a sister, named Rosalie Medumecka, who was carrying gravel. Rosalie called out, "My mother, I can do no more!" and the mother descended to relieve her, the sister taking her place on the scaffolding. In a few minutes a fearful crash, a cloud of dust, a piercing cry, and a moaning prayer, startled her from her labour; the wall had given way, and the nine sisters were crushed beneath the ruins. When she recovered from the faintness into which this terrible sight threw her, she was scourged, and driven to her work again.

One morning, a Russian verse was found written on the walls :

Here, instead of a monastery,  
Are Siberia and the Gallies.

The Basilian nuns were accused of having written this, and were flogged so brutally that two died; one that same evening, and the other the next morning. On this occasion word was again sent to Siemaszko, telling him that, terrified at their losses, they were prepared to recant. He arrived at Polosk in the autumn of 1841, to receive the same answer of firm and vehement denial, the abbess Makrena passionately reproaching him with being "apostate, traitor to the Church and to Jesus Christ!" It was on this occasion that he read to them the ukase signed by the emperor, which "approved, confirmed, and found holy, holy, thrice holy, all that Siemaszko had done, and that he may do for the propagation of the orthodox faith, commanding that no person dare to resist him in anything, and commanding also that in cases of resistance the military be placed under his orders on his simple demand." It was on this occasion also that he broke the upper cartilage of the mother's nose, and that he flogged the sisterhood as he had threatened, "till he had taken off three skins, one that they had received from God, and two from the emperor, that is to say, those that will come after;" when he affirmed they would be less obstinate, and would repent. After this scourging, another nun, Baselisse Holynska, died,



like so many others before her. But Siemaszko had not yet scourged them into pliability; and still they resisted him and stood firm.

In 1842, they were again flogged twice a week, fifty blows each time; and again three nuns died from the torture: one died during punishment, and the twenty blows that remained of her number were struck on her corpse; one died two hours after; and the third lingered in great agony till night, when she expired in her mother's arms, pressing the crucifix to her bleeding lips, and murmuring, "I love thee with all my heart!" as she died. After they had been scourged thus six times, the Russian general and his wife interfered. They came to the place as the executioners were about to begin, and the general commanded him to desist, telling him that he should be hung. "The emperor," he said to their protopapa Wierowkin, "has no knowledge of the horrible torments you inflict on your victims; and when he learns that I have hung thee, he may think, perhaps, 'the good old man has lost his senses;' but you will be hanged none the less for it." He did not know that all this was done under the express permission of the emperor, and with his knowledge. But Siemaszko returned, and by virtue of the ukase inflicted fresh cruelties on them; all the more bitter because of the temporary cessation. One evening they were brought home from work sooner than usual. As they entered their prison they were surrounded by a crowd of ferocious men, whom drink, and rage, and cruelty, and viler passions still, had transformed into worse than wild beasts. The nuns defended themselves—effectually, though the place swam with blood, and the barbarities used that fearful night were such as make one tremble. Two nuns were trampled to death, their countenances so disfigured by blows and the iron heels of the men's boots as to render them scarcely recognisable as human beings. One nun died from a bite in her shoulder, coupled with other wounds, and one had her nose bitten off; eight lost their sight, and the mother's head was laid open, her side gashed with a knife, and three wounds inflicted on her arms. It was one prostrate mass of blood and agony that those drunken fiends left groaning on the floor of their prison. During the night, a sister, Scholastica Rento, died:

Wierowkin and the Czernicks saying, "See how God punishes you for your obstinacy!"

Some months after this, a new punishment was devised. The remaining sisters were shut up for six days, and given only salted herrings to eat, without a drop of water or any other kind of food. This was one of the most painful tortures they had undergone, and made many of them fear for their reason. In the spring of the year 1843 their place of residence was again changed. Between soldiers with fixed bayonets they were marched off to Miadzioly. Here again they were placed with the Black Nuns, in a convent formerly belonging to the Carmelites, and here it was that the infamous murder and torture of the baths took place. The nuns, excepting those eight who were blind, were put into a kind of sack, with both arms thrust into a single sleeve, so that they could neither defend themselves nor assist each other. They were marched to the lake, flung in, and when up to their chests in water, with ropes fastened round their necks, men in boats dragged them along. This punishment lasted for about three hours. Sometimes the boats drifted on shore, and the poor women were then able to gain their feet for a moment, but the papa, under whose charge they were at Miadzioly, would then order the boatmen to row out into the lake, crying, "Drown them like puppies! drown them all!" They had these baths six times, twice a week for three weeks. They were not allowed to change their clothes all the night, and thus their old wounds were poisoned, and opened afresh, while new ones appeared all over their bodies. Three nuns were drowned in the baths, and buried without rites or service by the side of the lake. At last the punishment was discontinued, partly because the waters began to freeze, and partly because the Jews—who seem to have been always compassionate—entreated, and petitioned, and agitated the town, until the authorities thought it best to put an end to what was ceasing to be a warning, and becoming a martyrdom. But seven of the nuns had become entirely infirm, and at the end of their second year's residence at Miadzioly, only four remained of the three united sisterhoods of Minsk, Witebsk, and Polosk, who could still use their limbs or work. The rest were either blind or crippled.

During the last year, two nuns died; one suffocated by a badly acting stove, which they were allowed sometimes to use, and the second frozen to death in the forest, when sent out to gather firewood.

In March, 1845, they received warning from a friend, a priest of their own communion, who told them that they were all to be sent off to Siberia, and who advised them to make their escape if possible. A good opportunity presented itself at this time; for the birthday of the proto-papa Skrykin was approaching, when the whole convent would probably be given up to drunkenness and excess. So it happened; and on the night of the 1st of April—when guards, deacons, nuns, and priests were all lying drunk and incapable—the mother Makrena and three of her nuns made their escape from the convent, having first filed off their irons. They parted beneath the convent walls, giving each other rendezvous at a house where lived some sisters of another order; and here the reverend mother and one of the nuns did meet; but their hosts showed so much uneasiness at harbouring such guests, that the poor women took to flight again, each in different directions. After enduring great hardships and privations, Makrena arrived at Posen, where she presented herself at a convent of the Sisters of Charity; and where, on the 14th of August, 1845, her depositions on oath were taken before S. Kramarkiewicz and the Mediciner Rath Herr S. Jagielski, in the presence of the chaplain of the convent, Albin Thinet. “These depositions, signed with the name and sealed with the seal of the archbishop of Gnesna and Posen, attested also by the imperial police of Posen, are now in our possession,” says the writer from whom we take this account. Count Dzialynska, a Polish gentleman, certifies to the reception of the reverend mother in his château at Kornik, on her way through the grand duchy of Posen to Rome by way of Paris. Count Dzialynska says: “The abbess gave me the history of her lengthened sufferings; the truthful character of her relation, the persons whom she named to me, and other circumstances which my position allowed me to appreciate, inspired me with the most absolute faith in her words. She showed me her head, which bore on the top of the skull—at the left side, I believe—a large depression, covered with a newly-formed skin. The

cicatrice exactly resembled those of severe sabre-cuts: it was nearly an inch broad, and in length equivalent to the half of the last joint of the little finger. Her walk was feeble (*chancelante*), and the superioress (who accompanied her) assured me that her legs bore the marks of her fetters." "This certificate we have seen."\*

The first person who published the story of the abbess was a little too hurried to be quite accurate. Instead of at Minsk, he placed this convent at Kowna. This the Russian government made a great point of, and denied energetically—with truth, as to the mere locality: with unblushing falsehood as to everything else. But we have the deposition on oath of a professor at Posen, Jean Rymarkiewicz, who asserts that he was one of a hundred prisoners lodged for a whole winter in the Basilian convent at Minsk; and that the nuns, who had been driven out to an outhouse to make room for the prisoners, "procured comforts for them, both in food and clothing." Finally, we have the account of an English Protestant lady, who saw and conversed with the mother Makrena in February, 1848, in the convent of the Santa Trinita at Rome. At that time she was still suffering; but vigorous, stout-hearted, energetic, and determined as ever. To this lady she gave some curious details not published; one, of her escape through the gates of the frontier town. Unprovided with a passport, she was sure of being stopped, and if stopped, discovered. A herd of cattle were passing, and the abbess hid herself among them, passing through on all fours unperceived. Before she had thus escaped from the Russian territory, she went one day to church, where she heard her description given in the sermon; for the government set a large price on these poor fugitives, whose escape and freedom of speech might bring more ugly things to light. After service, she went boldly to the house of the priest and proclaimed herself. But instead of delivering her up to the authorities, he gave her bread and money, and set her in the right way to the frontier town.

\* Editor of "Household Words."



## CHAPTER LXIX.

## THE WAR IN THE CAUCASUS.

THE possession of the Caucasus is a question vitally affecting the interests of Russia in her provinces beyond that range of mountains, and her ulterior projects with regard to the regions of Persia and Central Asia. Here are the terms in which this subject is handled in a report printed at St. Petersburg, and addressed to the emperor after the expedition of general Emmaneul to Elbrouz in 1829 :

“ The Tcherkesses (Circassians) bar out Russia from the south, and may at their pleasure open or close the passage to the nations of Asia. At present their intestine dissensions, fostered by Russia, hinder them from uniting under one leader ; but it must not be forgotten that, according to traditions religiously preserved among them, the sway of their ancestors extended as far as to the Black Sea. They believe that a mighty people, descended from their ancestors, and whose existence is verified by the ruins of Madjar, has once already overrun the fine plains adjacent to the Danube, and finally settled in Panonia. Add to this consideration their superiority in arms. Perfect horsemen, extremely well armed, inured to war by the continual freebooting they exercise against their neighbours, courageous, and disdaining the advantages of our civilisation, the imagination is appalled at the consequences which their union under one leader might have for Russia, which has no other bulwark against their ravages than a military line, too extensive to be very strong.”

For the better understanding of the war which Russia has been so long waging with the mountaineers, let us glance at the topography of the Caucasus, and the respective positions of the belligerents.

The chain of the Caucasus exhibits a peculiar conformation, altogether different from that of any of the European chains. The Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Carpathians are accessible only by the valleys, and in these the inhabitants of the country find their subsistence, and agriculture de-

velops its wealth. The contrary is the case in the Caucasus. From the fortress of Anapa on the Black Sea, all along to the Caspian, the northern slope presents only immense inclined plains, rising in terraces to a height of 3000 or 4000 yards above the sea level. These plains, rent on all directions by deep and narrow valleys and vertical clefts, often form real steppes, and possess on their loftiest heights rich pastures, where the inhabitants, secure from all attack, find fresh grass for their cattle in the sultriest days of summer. The valleys on the other hand are frightful abysses, the steep sides of which are clothed with brambles, while the bottoms are filled with rapid torrents foaming over beds of rocks and stones. Such is the singular spectacle generally presented by the northern slope of the Caucasus. This brief description may give an idea of the difficulties to be encountered by an invading army. Obligated to occupy the heights, it is incessantly checked in its march by impassable ravines, which do not allow of the employment of cavalry, and for the most part prevent the passage of artillery. The ordinary tactics of the mountaineers is to fall back before the enemy, until the nature of the ground or the want of supplies obliges the latter to begin a retrograde movement. Then it is that they attack the invaders, and, entrenched in their forests behind impregnable rocks, they inflict the most terrible carnage on them with little danger to themselves.

On the south the character of the Caucasian chain is different. From Anapa to Gagra, along the shores of the Black Sea, we observe a secondary chain composed of schistous mountains, seldom exceeding 1000 yards in height. But the nature of their soil, and of their rocks, would be enough to render them almost impracticable for European armies, even were they not covered with impenetrable forests. The inhabitants of this region, who are called Tcherkesses or Circassians by the Russians, are entirely independent, and constitute one of the most warlike peoples of the Caucasus.

The great chain begins in reality at Gagra, but the mountains recede from the shore, and nothing is to be seen along the coast as far as Mingrelia but secondary hills, commanded by immense crags, that completely cut off all approach to the central part of the Caucasus. This region, so feebly defended by its topographical conformation, is Abkhasia, the inha-

bitants of which have been forced to submit to Russia. To the north and on the northern slope, westward of the military road from Mosdok to Tiflis, dwell a considerable number of tribes, some of them ruled by a sort of feudal system, others constituted into little republics. Those of the west, dependent on Circassia and Abadza, are in continual war with the empire, whilst the Nogais, who inhabit the plains on the left bank of the Kuma, and the tribes of the Great Kabarda, own the sovereignty of the czar; but their wavering and dubious submission cannot be relied on. In the centre, at the foot of the Elbrouz, dwell the Souanethes, an unsubdued people, and near them, occupying both sides of the pass of Dariel, are the Ingouches and Ossetans, exceptional tribes, essentially different from the aboriginal peoples. Finally we have, eastward of the great Tiflis road, near the Terek, Little Kabarda, and the country of the Kumicks, for the present subjugated; and then those indomitable tribes, the Lesghis and Tchetchenzenes, of whom Shamyl is the Abd-el-Kader, and who extend over the two slopes of the Caucasus to the vicinity of the Caspian.

In reality, the Kuban and the Terek, that rise from the central chain, and fall, the one into the Black Sea, the other into the Caspian, may be considered as the northern political limits of independent Caucasus. It is along those two rivers that Russia has formed her armed line, defended by Cossacks, and detachments from the regular army. The Russians have, indeed, penetrated those northern frontiers at sundry points, and have planted some forts within the country of the Lesghis and Tchetchenzenes. But those lonely posts, in which a few unhappy garrisons are surrounded on all sides, and generally without a chance of escape, cannot be regarded as a real occupation of the soil on which they stand. They are, in fact, only so many pickets, whose business is only to watch more closely the movements of the mountaineers. In the south, from Anapa to Gagra, along the Black Sea, the imperial possessions never extended beyond a few detached forts, completely isolated, and deprived of all means of communication by land. A rigorous blockade was established on this coast; but the Circassians, as intrepid in their frail barks as among their mountains, often passed by night through the Russian line of vessels, and reached Trebisond and Constan-

tinople. Elsewhere, from Mingrelia to the Caspian, the frontiers are less precisely defined, and generally run parallel with the great chain of the Caucasus.

Thus limited, the Caucasus, including the territory occupied by the subject tribes, presents a surface of scarcely 5000 leagues; and it is in this narrow region that a virgin and chivalric nation, amounting at most to 2,000,000 of souls, proudly upholds its independence against the might of the Russian empire, and has for upwards of twenty years sustained one of the most obstinate struggles known to modern history.

The Russian line of the Kuban, which is exactly similar to that of the Terek, is defended by the Cossacks of the Black Sea, the poor remains of the famous Zaporogues, whom Catherine II. subdued with so much difficulty, and whom she colonised at the foot of the Caucasus, as a bulwark against the incursions of the mountaineers. The line consists of small forts and watch stations; the latter are merely a kind of sentry-box raised on four posts, about fifty feet from the ground. Two Cossacks keep watch in them day and night. On the least movement of the enemy in the vast plain of reeds that fringes both banks of the river, a beacon fire is kindled on the top of the watchbox. If the danger becomes more pressing, an enormous torch of straw and tar is set fire to. The signal is repeated from post to post, the whole line springs to arms, and 500 or 600 men are instantly assembled on the point threatened. These posts, composed generally of a dozen men, are very close to each other, particularly in the most dangerous places. Small forts have been erected at intervals with earthworks, and a few pieces of cannon; they contain each from 150 to 200 men.

But notwithstanding all the vigilance of the Cossacks, often aided by the troops of the line, the mountaineers not unfrequently cross the frontier and carry their incursions, which are always marked with massacre and pillage, the adjacent provinces. These are bloody but justifiable reprisals. In 1835 a body of fifty horsemen entered the country of the Cossacks, and proceeded to a distance of 120 leagues, to plunder the German colony of Madjar and the important village of Vladimirofka, on the Kuma, and what is most remarkable, they got back to their mountains without



being interrupted. The same year Kisliar, on the Caspian, was sacked by the Lesghis. These daring expeditions prove of themselves how insufficient is the armed line of the Caucasus, and to what dangers that part of southern Russia is exposed.

The line of forts until lately existing along the Black Sea was quite as weak, and the Circassians there were quite as daring. They used to carry off the Russian soldiers from beneath the fire of their redoubts, and come up to the very foot of their walls to insult the garrison. Hommaire de Hell relates that, at the time he was exploring the mouths of the Kuban, a hostile chief had the audacity to appear one day before the gates of Anapa. He did all he could to irritate the Russians, and abusing them as cowards and woman-hearted, he defied them to single combat. Exasperated by his invectives, the commandant ordered that he should be fired on with grape. The horse of the mountaineer reared and threw off his rider, who, without letting go the bridle, instantly mounted again, and, advancing still nearer to the walls, discharged his pistol almost at point-blank distance at the soldiers, and galloped off to the mountains.

As for the blockade by sea, the imperial squadron has not been expert enough to render it really effectual. It was only a few armed boats, manned by Cossacks, that gave the Circassians any serious uneasiness. These Cossacks, like those of the Black Sea, are descended from the Zaporogues. Previously to the last war with Turkey they were settled on the right bank of the Danube, where their ancestors had taken refuge after the destruction of their Setcha. During the campaigns of 1828-29, pains were taken to revive their national feelings, they were brought again by fair means or by force under the imperial sway, and were then settled in the forts along the Caucasian shore, the keeping of which was committed to their charge. Courageous, enterprising, and worthy rivals of their foes, they waged a most active war against the skiffs of the mountaineers in their boats, which carry crews of fifty or sixty men.

The treaty of Adrianople was in a manner the opening of a new era in the relations of Russia with the mountaineers; for it was by virtue of that treaty that the czar, already master of Anapa and Sudjuk Kaleh, pretended to the sovereignty of Circassia and of the whole seaboard of the Black

Sea. True to the invariable principles of its foreign policy, the government at first employed means of corruption, and strove to seduce the various chiefs of the country by pensions, decorations, and military appointments. But the mountaineers, who had the example of the Persian provinces before their eyes, sternly rejected all the overtures of Russia, and repudiated the clauses of the convention of Adrianople; the political and commercial independence of their country became their rallying cry, and they would not treat on any other condition. All such ideas were totally at variance with Nicholas's schemes of absolute dominion; therefore he had recourse to arms to obtain by force what he had been unable to accomplish by other means.

Abkhasia, situated on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, and easily accessible, was the first invaded. A Russian force occupied the country in 1839, under the ordinary pretence of supporting one of its princes, and putting an end to anarchy. In the same year general Paskievitch, then governor-general of the Caucasus, for the first time made an armed exploration of the country of the Tcherkesses beyond the Kuban; but he effected absolutely nothing, and his expedition only resulted in a great loss of men and stores. In the following year war broke out in Daghestan with the Lesghis and the Tchetchenzes. The celebrated Kadi Mulah, giving himself out for a prophet, gathered together a considerable number of partisans; but unfortunately for him there was no unanimity among the tribes, and the princes were continually counteracting each other. Kadi Mulah never was able to bring more than 3000 or 4000 men together; nevertheless, he maintained the struggle with a courage worthy of a better fate, and Russia knows what it cost her to put down the revolt of Daghestan. As for any real progress in that part of the Caucasus, the Russians made none; they did no more than replace things on the old footing. Daghestan soon became again more hostile than ever, and the Tchetchenzes and Lesghis continued in separate detachments to plunder and ravage the adjacent provinces up to the time when the ascendancy of the celebrated Shamyl, the worthy successor of Kadi Mulah, gave a fresh impulse to the warlike tribes of the mountain, and rendered them more formidable than ever.

After taking possession of Anapa and Sudjuk Kaleb, the Russians thought of seizing the whole seaboard of Circassia, and especially the various points suitable for the establishment of military posts. They made themselves masters of Guelendchik and the important position of Gagra, which commands the pass between Circassia and Abkhasia. The Tcherkesses heroically defended their territory; but how could they have withstood the guns of the ships of war that mowed them down whilst the soldiers were landing and constructing their redoubts? The blockade of the coasts was declared in 1838, and all foreign communication with the Caucasus ostensibly intercepted. During the four following years Russia suffered heavy losses; and all her successes were limited to the establishment of some small isolated forts on the sea-coast. She then increased her army, laid down the military road from the Kuban to Guelendchik, across the last western offshoot of the Caucasus, set on foot an exploration of the enemy's whole coast, and prepared to push the war with renewed vigour.

In 1837 the emperor Nicholas visited the Caucasus. He would see for himself the theatre of a war so diastrous for his arms, and try what impression his imperial presence could make on the mountaineers. The chiefs of the country were invited to various conferences, to which they boldly repaired on the faith of the Russian parole; but instead of conciliating them by words of peace and moderation, the emperor only exasperated them by his threatening and haughty language. "Do you know," said he to them, "that I have powder enough to blow up all your mountains?"\*

During the three following years there was an incessant succession of expeditions. Golovin, on the frontiers of Georgia, Grabe on the north, and Racifsky on the Circassian seaboard, left nothing untried to accomplish their master's orders. The sacrifices incurred by Russia were enormous; the greater part of her fleet was destroyed by a storm, but all efforts failed against the intrepidity and tactics of the mountaineers. Some new forts erected under cover of the ships

\* In the same boastful spirit general Veliaminof told the Circassians that "if the sky were to fall, the soldiers of Russia were numerous enough to prop it up on their bayonets."

were all that resulted from these disastrous campaigns. "I was in the Caucasus in 1839," says Hommaire de Hell, "when Grabe returned from his famous expedition against Shamyl. When the army marched it had numbered 6000 men, 1000 of whom, and 120 officers, were cut off in three months. But as the general had advanced further into the country than any of his predecessors, Russia sang pæans, and Grabe became the hero of the day, although the imperial troops had been forced to retreat and entirely evacuate the country they had invaded. All the other expeditions were similar to this one, and achieved in reality nothing but the burning and destruction of a few villages. It is true the mountaineers are far from being victorious in all their encounters with the Russians, whose artillery they cannot easily withstand; but if they are obliged to give way to numbers, or to engineering, nevertheless they remain in the end masters of the ground, and annul all the momentary advantages gained by their enemies."

The year 1840 was still more fatal to the arms of Nicholas. Almost all the new forts on the seaboard were taken by the Circassians, who bravely attacked and carried the best fortified posts without artillery. The military road from the Kuban to Guelendchik was intercepted, Fort St. Nicholas, which commanded it, was stormed and the garrison massacred. Never yet had Russia endured such heavy blows. The disasters were such that the official journals themselves, after many months' silence, were at last obliged to speak of them, and to try to gloss them over by publishing turgid eulogiums on the heroism of the unfortunate Black Sea garrisons; but the most serious losses, the destruction of the new road from the Kuban, the taking of Fort St. Nicholas, and that of several other forts, were entirely forgotten in the official statement, and no facts mentioned but those which might be interpreted in favour of Russia's military glory.

On the eastern side of the mountain the war was fully as disastrous for the invaders. The imperial army lost four hundred petty officers and soldiers, and twenty-nine officers in the battle of Valrik against the Tchetchenzes. The military colonies of the Terek were attacked and plundered, and when general Golovin retired to his winter quarters at the end of the campaign, he had lost more than three-fourths of his men.



The Great Kabarda did not remain an indifferent spectator of the offensive league formed by the tribes of the Caucasus; and when Russia, suspecting with reason the unfriendly disposition of some tribes, made an armed exploration on the banks of the Laba in order to construct redoubts, and thus cut off the subjugated tribes from the others, the general found the country, wherever he advanced, but a desert. All the inhabitants had already retired to the other side of the Laba to join their warlike neighbours.

Since that time fresh defeats have been made known through the press, and in spite of all the mystery in which the war of the Caucasus is sought to be wrapt, the truth has, nevertheless, transpired. The last military operations of Russia, previous to the conflict with Turkey and the Western Powers in which she is now engaged, were as unproductive as those that preceded them, and proved that no change had taken place in the belligerents respectively. Thus we see that, in despite of the resources of the empire and of the indomitable obstinacy of the emperor, the position of Russia in the Caucasus has been quite stationary for sixty years.

Before we close this chapter, we must notice an incident in the war of the Caucasus which set the whole English press in a blaze in 1837—namely, the confiscation of the merchant vessel *Vixen*, which was captured by a Russian cruiser on the Circassian coast on the 25th of November, 1836. The owner, Mr. Bell, a British merchant, appealed for indemnification to his own government, but his claim was disallowed. In the reply to his application, it was stated that “his majesty’s government, considering, in the first place, that Sudjuk Kaleh, which was acknowledged by Russia in the treaty of 1783 (1784) as a Turkish possession, now belongs to Russia, as stated by count Nesselrode, by virtue of the treaty of Adrianople, they see no sufficient reason to question the right of Russia to seize and confiscate the *Vixen*.” Now this part of the answer was unfortunate, for it attributed proprietary rights to Russia by virtue of a previous title in Turkey, of which there was no other evidence than that of Russia herself. It is fully demonstrated that Turkey never possessed any such right over Circassia; she had merely erected on the seaboard, with the consent of the inhabitants, the two fortresses of Anapa and Sudjuk Kaleh

for the protection of the trade between the two countries. Russia herself, in the beginning, acknowledged this state of things; and the evidence of her having done so is to be found in the general depôt of the map of the empire. "Chance," says Hommaire de Hell, "threw into my hands a map of the Caucasus, made by the Russian engineers long prior to the treaty of Adrianople. The Turkish possessions are distinctly marked on it, and defined by a red boundary line; they consist solely of the two fortresses on the coast. This map, the existence of which one day sorely surprised Count Vorontzof, governor-general of New Russia, was sent to England, and deposited in the Foreign Office during Lord Palmerston's administration." It is evident, then, that Russia could not derive from Turkey a right over the Circassian coast, which the inhabitants of the mountain have never ceased to claim as their own; therefore, the plea founded on that pretended right was altogether fallacious. But it was a sufficient answer to Mr. Bell to say that he had wilfully broken the blockade established by Russia along the Circassian coast. The czar's government being at war with the mountaineers, might at its pleasure intercept foreign trade with the enemy's country. This is an incontestable right recognised by all nations, and therefore the affair of the *Vixen* was not worth the noise made about it.

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## CHAPTER LXX.

TREATY OF UNKIAR SKELESSI—EXPEDITION TO KHIVA—  
MEMORANDUM OF 1844 ON THE EASTERN QUESTION—  
EXTINCTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CRACOW—SECRET  
SOCIETIES—INTERVENTION IN THE PRINCIPALITIES AND  
IN HUNGARY.

ENCOURAGED by the crippled state of the Turkish empire, its most powerful vassal, Mohammed Ali, pasha of Egypt, revolted against his sovereign; his son, Ibrahim Pasha, wrested Syria from the Porte, overran Asia Minor, and closed a series of victories over the sultan's troops by that of Koniah, which laid open to him the road to Constanti-

nople, then left defenceless, for the Turkish fleet had meanwhile been treacherously surrendered to the pasha of Egypt. The same causes which had withheld England and France from preventing the disastrous treaty of Adrianople still kept them inactive spectators of its natural consequences, and sultan Mahmoud was compelled reluctantly to accept the aid of Russia, his inveterate foe, to save his empire from imminent destruction. Willing as the czar was to see Turkey dismembered, he could not suffer its capital, which he looked on as his own destined prey, to fall into hands from which it might not easily be wrested. Russia then, acting as the ally of the Porte, sent her fleet into the Bosphorus, and compelled Ibrahim Pasha to suspend his victorious march, under a threat of hostilities if he continued to advance. In return for this aid the czar extorted from the Porte the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, which was signed on the 8th of July, 1833. It purported to be a treaty of defensive alliance between the two contracting powers, but its real import was expressed in a secret article, whereby it was provided that as the emperor of Russia was willing to spare his ally the expense and embarrassment of affording him military succour, "the Sublime Porte, instead of the aid it is bound to furnish in case of need, according to the reciprocity of the treaty, will limit its action in favour of the imperial court of Russia to closing the straits of the Dardanelles; that is to say, by not permitting any foreign vessel of war, under any pretext whatever, to enter those straits." This was a subtle stroke, for in effect it was no less than to put the Porte under the exclusive protection of Russia, enable her to force it into collision with all her enemies and its own friends, place all its resources at her disposal, and render all interposition of other powers impossible. But subsequent events deprived Russia of these surreptitious privileges.

The menaces of the czar had only suspended the aggressions of the pasha of Egypt, leaving him in full possession of his conquests. He renewed his hostilities with such effect, that at last England and France thought it necessary to interpose, and a note was signed on the 27th of July, 1839, by virtue of which, instead of the exclusive protectorate of Russia, the Ottoman empire was placed under the common safeguard of the five great powers.

Mohammed Ali was prudent and moderate ; in the midst of his triumphs, he only asked to be hereditary and independent ruler of Egypt, and to retain in his possession the pashalics of Adana and Syria. France was favourable to these pretensions, which were discountenanced by England, and Russia did not seriously oppose them, for they were not at variance with her own interests, and nothing could be more gratifying to Nicholas than to see the constitutional government of France isolated from the rest of Europe. The result was that a convention was concluded at London on the 15th of July, 1840, between Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey, which recited that the four powers were “ animated by the desire of maintaining the integrity and independence of the Ottoman empire, as a security for the peace of Europe.” The convention of London also impliedly set aside the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, for it recognised “ the ancient rule of the Ottoman empire, in virtue of which it has at all times been prohibited for ships of war of foreign powers to enter the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus.” On his part, the sultan undertook “ to maintain this principle invariably established as the ancient rule of the empire, and, *as long as the Porte is at peace*, to admit no foreign ship of war into the straits of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.” The original treaty required the Porte to shut the straits when *Russia was at war*, and that obligation was now removed.

In the course of these negotiations, Baron Brunow, the Russian ambassador at the court of St. James’s, proposed that, if armed intervention should be necessary, “ the defence of Constantinople and the Bosphorus should be assigned to Russia alone.” Lord Palmerston required that in such an event the Dardanelles should be opened to the fleets of the co-operating powers, when the Bosphorus was open to the Russian forces. But this was a demand which the baron was not authorised to concede, and which he referred to St. Petersburg. In the mean time, he urged the necessity of instant recourse to active measures, “ leaving the question about the Dardanelles to be settled, if and when it should arise.” He even urged the British government to take some active measures against the pasha, without awaiting the conclusion of any formal agreement with the other powers. But the British minister rejected both proposals,



and made the acquiescence of Russia in his demands as to the Dardanelles a *sine quâ non*. The court of St. Petersburg could not have rejected that demand without renewing the distrust which it was so anxious to remove, and after a little consideration it gave way; but only on the condition that a point should be determined in the Sea of Marmora, beyond which the ships of war permitted to pass the Dardanelles should not be at liberty to advance towards Constantinople and the Bosphorus. She felt the jealousy of a lover, and could not with complacency permit any one else to approach the object of her affections. This puerile demand was obviously untenable, and is worth recording only as an indication of character and sentiment.\*

France had been no party to the convention of July, 1840; but on the 13th July, 1841, this state of isolation terminated, and by a new treaty of that date the five powers bound themselves to respect the rights and promote the consolidation of the Ottoman empire. The capture of Acre by Sir Robert Stopford, and the successes of commodore Napier in Syria, soon demonstrated the weakness and prostrated the strength of Mehemet Ali. Peace was concluded. The revolted pasha was confirmed in the hereditary government of Egypt; but he had to surrender the island of Candia and the pashalics of Adana and Syria, with the exception of the ancient Palestine.

The result of an expedition sent by Russia against Khiva in the year 1840 may serve to allay the fears of those who dream of danger to the British empire in India from a possible Russian invasion. General Perofsky, who marched at the head of 6000 infantry with 10,000 baggage camels, could not even reach the territory of Khiva, which is separated from Orenburg by four hundred miles of salt desert. The disasters suffered by his troops obliged him to retrace his steps without having advanced further than the Ac Boulak, the last outpost erected by the Russians in 1839, a hundred miles from the Emba. The obstacles encountered by his small army were beyond all description. The cold was fearful, being 40° below zero of the centegrade thermometer; the camels could scarcely advance through the snow; and

\* "Progress of Russia in the East," p. 133.

the movements of the troops were constantly impeded by hurricanes of extraordinary violence. The fact that such an expedition was undertaken in the depth of winter, solely for the purpose of having fresh water, may enable one to guess at the difficulties of a march over the same ground in summer. Spring is a season unknown in all the vast plains of Southern Russia; intense frost is there abruptly succeeded by tropical heat, and a fortnight is generally sufficient to dry up the small streams and the stagnant waters produced by the melting of the snows, and to scorch up the thin coating of pasturage which for a brief while had covered the steppes.

The emperor of Russia paid a visit to England in 1844, and the long-familiar "Eastern Question" became the subject of conversation between his majesty and some members of the then existing government. No particular difficulty respecting it had then arisen or seemed impending. No action was called for in regard to it. The communication made by the emperor was accordingly nothing more than an explanation of the general principles of policy to which he professed his anxiety to adhere. After the emperor's return to Russia the substance of this communication on his part was embodied in a memorandum, which was transmitted to Lord Aberdeen, then minister for foreign affairs. Being simply a memorandum of verbal communications, and not being a document on which it was asked or proposed that any action should be taken, it appears to have been shown only to those ministers with whom the conversations had been held. The two other ministers were Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington; and if the terms of that document had remained still unknown, these three names, or any one of them, would have been a sufficient guarantee that it contained nothing which it was unbecoming an English minister to receive.

Accordingly it may be safely said, that if the emperor of Russia had adhered to the principles he professed in this memorandum, the present war would never have arisen. It contains these main propositions:

That the maintenance of the Porte, in its existing independence and its existing extent of territory, is a great object of European policy: that, in order to this maintenance, the several powers should abstain from making demands upon it, conceived in a selfish interest, or from

assuming towards it an attitude of "exclusive dictation:" that in the event of the Porte giving to any one of the powers just cause of complaint, that power should be aided by the rest in its endeavours to have such cause removed, so that all occasion of conflict should be avoided: that all the European powers should urge on the Porte the duty of conciliating its Christian subjects, and should at the same time use all their influence with those subjects to keep them to their allegiance: that in the event of any unforeseen calamity befalling the Turkish empire, Russia and England should agree together as to the course to be pursued: lastly, the memorandum suggests that it would be wise to provide against such an event by anticipation, and to come in respect of it to some previous agreement.

No such agreement was come to in consequence of this memorandum. It remained simply as a declaration and explanation of the ideas entertained by the emperor of Russia on a subject of great interest to Europe. It was communicated as such by Lord Aberdeen to the French minister. It was transferred to the hands of each secretary of state for foreign affairs who succeeded to office; and by all of them it appears to have been treated as a document containing a declaration of very excellent principles to which it would be most satisfactory that the emperor of Russia should continue his adherence, but which called for no action or decision whatever on the part of the English government.

It is obvious that until some event happened, or some dispute arose which was likely to disturb the relations of Turkey with one or more of the European powers, this must have continued to be the view taken of the Russian memorandum. And when any such dispute should arise, the only practical use of the memorandum would be to remind Russia of her own principles, and to help her to put them into practice. It was not until nearly six years after the visit of the emperor of Russia to England in 1844 that any such event or dispute arose.

In February, 1846, an insurrection broke out in the little state of Cracow. A provisional government was formed, and published a manifesto of its principles. "Let us endeavour," it proclaimed, "to establish a community in which

every man will enjoy the fruits of the earth according to his deserts and capacity; let all privileges cease, let those who are inferior in birth, intelligence, or physical strength, obtain without humiliation the unfailing assistance of communism, which will divide among all the absolute proprietorship of the soil, now enjoyed by a small minority. Let all imposts, whether paid in labour or in money, cease; and let all who have fought for their country have an indemnity in land taken from the national property." This was regarded as a proclamation of war against all who had anything to lose. Such was the terror inspired, that the Austrian general, Collin, who had entered Cracow at the request of the senate, evacuated that town and Podgorze on the approach of Count Patelsky at the head of 2000 peasants armed with scythes. The senators fled with the troops. A committee of public safety and a national club were formed; for this first success emboldened the people to hope that they could re-establish the whole of Poland.

But the Gallician peasants, who had long hated the nobility, now wreaked their vengeance on that proscribed class. Their mansions were burnt, their property pillaged, their wives and children massacred, these deeds being encouraged by the Austrian authorities, who rewarded the perpetrators according to a fixed tariff of blood-money. The insurrection having thus been put down by means of subsidised anarchy, general Collin surrounded Cracow with his troops, seized all the positions commanding the city, and threatened bombardment unless the insurgents immediately surrendered, and gave hostages for his peaceable admission into the city. A show of resistance was offered by the dictator Wisziewsky, who gave orders to construct barricades; but the principal inhabitants opposed these orders, and sent a deputation to treat with the Austrian general. While the negotiations were pending, a Russian battalion of infantry, supported by some Cossacks, entered the city. Within three days they were followed by the Prussians, to whom the insurgents surrendered at discretion.

The fall of Cracow excited a lively interest in London and Paris, France and England having guaranteed its independence as parties to the treaty of Vienna. Lord Palmerston expressed his opinion in the following terms:—"I have too



high an opinion of the sentiments which must animate the three powers, to doubt of their acting towards Cracow in any other spirit than that of the treaty of Vienna. Those governments are too intelligent not to perceive that the treaty of Vienna must be considered in its integrity, and that no government is permitted to make a choice of those articles which it may wish to preserve or violate. I must add, that if there are any powers who have signed the treaty of Vienna who are specially interested in its faithful execution, they are the German powers; and I am sure that it cannot have escaped the perspicacity of those powers, that if the treaty of Vienna is not good on the Vistula, it must be equally bad on the Rhine and the Po."

M. Guizot forwarded a protest to Vienna against the incorporation of Cracow with the Austrian empire. "Nothing," said the French minister, "more compromises a government than an avowal of its inability to fulfil, even slowly, its own promises, and the hopes which it has excited. The destruction of the small state of Cracow may deprive Polish conspirators and insurgents of some means of action, but it must also foster and irritate the feelings in which these deplorable enterprises have so frequently and so obstinately originated, and, moreover, weaken the influences by which they might be prevented. It enfeebles throughout Europe the principles of order and conservatism, and strengthens blind passions and violent designs."

In April, 1846, conferences on this grave subject were opened in Vienna. Prussia proposed to retain Cracow as an independent and neutral state, under the protectorate of the three powers, which Russia and Austria opposed. Other discussions took place, in which there was no unanimity. At length Prince Metternich addressed a note to the French government, dated the 6th November, 1846, which terminated with the following words:—"The conditions on which Cracow was constituted an independent state once vitiated, lose all their essential qualities. Its institutions are annihilated, its neutrality is violated, its administration is disorganised; and it is not possible to reconstruct what has ceased to exist. That existence reposed on the principle of a pacific neutrality, and Cracow only wished for war. That war Cracow has carried on during fifteen years of machina-

tions, sometimes concealed, sometimes open, and maintained it up to the very moment when recourse to arms became general. The natural and obvious consequences of these relations is, that the city and its territory must revert to that one of the powers to which it formerly belonged. This reunion is founded on the conviction of the three powers, that it is one of absolute necessity, which they do not hesitate to avow."

Prince Metternich did not always entertain those opinions. On the 9th of February, 1818, he expressed himself thus:—"The final act of the congress of Vienna is undoubtedly the fundamental law of the present political system of Europe, since it has been sanctioned by the assent of all the states of which that system is composed. For this reason, the arrangements and principles which are set down on this act, whether they regard any European state directly or indirectly, have been obligatory on all." However, after the free town of Cracow was suppressed, he asserted that the three northern powers had a right to act without the co-operation of the other powers who had signed the treaty of Vienna, and even in defiance of their wishes and protests. Cracow was formally annexed to Austria on the 11th of November, 1846; and thus disappeared the last remnant of Polish nationality.

The socialistic insurrection of Cracow was a sudden revelation of that spirit which two years later shook Europe to its centre. As soon as the emperor Nicholas heard of the French revolution of 1848, he said to the officers of his guards, "Gentlemen, prepare to mount your horses." But for the second time his intended march to Paris was stopped by dangers at home, for secret societies had again been formed in Russia, as in the reign of Alexander. The only information we have respecting them is that which may be gathered from a semi-official manifesto in the *St. Petersburg Journal*, which was evidently communicated by the government.

"The pernicious doctrines which caused troubles and revolts throughout all Western Europe, and which threaten completely to destroy order and the prosperity of nations, have unfortunately found an echo, though a feeble one, in our own country. But in Russia, where a holy faith, the love of the monarch, and devotion to the throne, based on the national character, have been preserved unshaken in

every heart, the malevolent action of a handful of men, utterly null in point of influence, for the most part young and destitute of morals, dreaming of the possibility of trampling under foot the most sacred rights of religion, the obligations of law, and the claims of property, could only assume a dangerous development in case the government had not discovered the evil in its source. The result of a commission of inquiry is, that a certain number of young men, some really perverse in heart and mind, others imprudent victims to perfidious insinuations, had formed a secret society, having for its object the violent overthrow of our political organisation, and to substitute anarchy in its place. Blasphemies, audacious propositions directed against the sacred person of the emperor, acts of the government represented in the falsest light, such was the programme of these meetings, such were the questions discussed while awaiting the moment to put their infamous projects into execution. By order of his majesty the commission of inquiry was instituted. This commission, after five months of searching investigations, has prepared and delivered its report. His imperial majesty has deigned to accord a full pardon to all who were ensnared into the conspiracy, whether by accident or inconsiderateness. As to the real criminals, they were judged by a court-martial, whose decision declared the accused guilty of the crime of conspiring to overturn the existing laws and the political order of the empire, and condemned them to be shot. They were twenty-one in number. His majesty the emperor, after having made himself acquainted with the report, has deigned to direct his attention to the circumstances which, to a certain extent, may mitigate the sentence, and, in consequence, ordains as follows :—The judgment shall be read to the twenty-one convicts in presence of the assembled troops ; and after all the preliminaries of the execution of sentence of death shall have been performed, it will be announced to them that the emperor spares their lives, and that in commutation of the sentence pronounced against them, they shall be deprived of all their civil rights, and condemned in proportion to their degrees of culpability,—some to hard labour in the mines, others to hard labour in fortresses, others to incorporation with different corps of the army, after having undergone a longer or shorter imprisonment. Thus the

guilty, who have merited the sentence of death according to law, commuted by the inexhaustible clemency of the emperor, will undergo a just punishment. May this culpable attempt serve as a warning and a salutary example to young men already perhaps led astray, but not yet criminal! May parents especially direct their particular attention to the moral education of their children, and convince them from their earliest years, that a holy faith, love of the sovereign, devotedness to the throne, with obedience to the laws and the established authorities, are the only firm foundations of the tranquillity of *states*, as they are of general and individual welfare!"

The revolution at Bukharest was the first occasion seized by the emperor Nicholas after the European convulsion of 1848 to promote the secret ends of Russian policy, whilst ostensibly acting only as the grand champion of conservative and monarchical principles. An imperial manifesto, dated the 31st July, 1848, announced that, in conjunction with the sultan, the emperor would intervene in the affairs of the insurgent provinces, under the usual pretext of defeating any effort that might be made "to impair the integrity of the Ottoman empire, now more essential than ever to the maintenance of general peace." The revolution was summarily suppressed, and the convention of Balta Liman was concluded with the Sublime Porte, confirming and extending the protectorate exercised by Russia over the principalities. The intervention was also very serviceable to Russia in securing to her a military position of great importance with regard to the invasion of Hungary, in which she next engaged.

Twice had the Austrian armies been swept out of Hungary by the brave Magyars, and that kingdom must have been lost for ever to the house of Hapsburg but for the aid afforded it by the emperor Nicholas. His manifesto, dated the 8th May, 1849, was conceived in the following terms:

"By our manifesto of the 14-26 of May of last year, we informed our faithful subjects of the evils which had befallen Western Europe. At that date we declared our intention of combating the enemies of public order wherever they might be found—of protecting the honour of the Russian name and the inviolability of our frontiers, identifying our own person in indissoluble union with our holy Russia. Since this, dis-



turbances and seditious movements have never ceased in the east of Europe. Culpable enterprises have led astray the credulous mob by the deceitful illusion of a happiness which never arose from anarchy and licentiousness. The criminal attempts have extended to the East, in the principalities adjoining our empire in Vallachia and Moldavia, subject to the Turkish government. The entry of our troops and of the Ottoman troops into these provinces has been sufficient there to establish and maintain tranquillity; but in Hungary and Transylvania the efforts of the Austrian government, divided by war on another point with national and foreign enemies, have proved up to this day unavailing in the conquest of revolt. The insurrection, supported by the influence of our traitors in Poland of the year 1831, and by reinforcements of refugees and vagabonds from other countries, has given to this revolt a most menacing character. In the midst of these disastrous events, his majesty the emperor of Austria has invited us to assist him against the common enemy: we cannot refuse that service. After having invoked the God of battles and the Master of victories to protect the just cause, we have ordered our army to march to stifle revolt, and annihilate audacious anarchists who threaten the tranquillity of our provinces. Let God be with us, and none can resist us, of which we are convinced. Such are the sentiments of all our subjects. Every Russian shares in this hope, and Russia will fulfil her holy mission."

Hungary was subjugated, not so much by the combined forces of Austria and Russia, as by the treachery of general Görgei, her commander-in-chief; nay, it is probable that if he had not purposely fought a losing game, he might have annihilated the main body of the Russians under Paskievitch. Instead of co-operating to this end with the division under Dembinski, he sedulously kept aloof from it, and after Dembinski had been routed at Temesvar on the 9th of August, he had himself appointed dictator, and immediately sent a letter to general Rüdiger, stating that he was ready to lay down his arms unconditionally. "At that moment," Görgei says in his Memoirs, "I might indeed have retreated from Arad, by way of Radna, into Transylvania; but"—what hindered him?—"my affection for my country, and my desire to restore it to peace at any price, induced me to sur-

render!" The preliminaries for this act of infamy were concluded at Vilagos on the night of the 12th of August; and on the following day an unconquered Hungarian army, 24,000 strong, with 144 cannons, laid down their arms before the Russians.

Five days after this event the emperor Nicholas published the following manifesto:

" 'Russia will fulfil her holy mission.' Such were the words that we addressed to our well-beloved subjects when we announced to them, according to the desire of our ally the emperor of Austria, that we had commanded our armies to stifle the war in Hungary, and there establish the legitimate authority of the emperor. Under the protection of God, that object has been accomplished. In less than two months, our brave troops, after numerous and brilliant victories in Transylvania and under the walls of Debreczin, have marched from victory to victory—from Galicia to Pesth, from Pesth to Arad, from the Bukovina and Moldavia to the Banat. Finally, the bands of insurgents, hurled back in every direction—from north to east by ourselves, from the west and south by the Austrian army—have laid down their arms before the Russian army, appealing to our mediation to solicit a magnanimous pardon from their legitimate sovereign. After having holily performed our promise, we have ordered our victorious troops to return within the limits of the empire. With a heart penetrated with gratitude to the Dispenser of all blessings, we cry out, from the innermost recesses of our soul, '*Nobiscum Deus! audite populi et vince-mini, quia nobiscum Deus!*' "

Immediately after Kossuth, the civil governor of Hungary, resigned his power into Görgei's hands, himself and several other civil and military leaders, with about five thousand officers and soldiers, escaped over the Turkish frontier, and took refuge in Widdin. The emperors of Russia and Austria demanded the extradition of the refugees. This was peremptorily refused by the sultan, whom Sir Stratford Canning, the British ambassador, encouraged by his advice to persist in that determination. The emperor of Russia reiterated the demand in menacing language; but the appearance of a British fleet in the Dardanelles induced him to lower his tone. The two emperors now contented themselves with requiring

that the exiles should be removed to a more distant part of the Turkish empire. They were transferred accordingly to Kutayah, where they remained until the middle of the year 1851, when the government of the United States sent a man-of-war, which, with the sultan's consent, conveyed away Kosuth and his companions, except a certain number of them who had made a voluntary profession of Islamism, in hopes of having yet an opportunity of fighting as Turkish subjects against Russia.

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## CHAPTER LXXI.

### WAR WITH TURKEY, FRANCE, AND ENGLAND: ITS ORIGIN.

"*Deus nobiscum!*" exclaimed the emperor Nicholas, fanatically, assured of his right and might as lord-paramount of Europe. "*Deus vobiscum!*" responded the continental sovereigns, eager to claim, as vassals, his protection against their own dreaded subjects. Now, he thought, was the time to consummate that cardinal design of Russian policy—the conquest of Constantinople; for never could the general state of Europe be more favourable; and moreover, a special opportunity had been opened for him in the action of France.

As he gradually advanced towards the imperial power, Louis Napoleon had shown in many ways such a disposition to serve the Church of Rome, as to earn for himself the especial approbation of the Pope. Amongst other things, both as president and emperor, he did much to push the claims of the Latin clergy in the East, and particularly in the Holy Land; and by fresh stipulations with the Porte he succeeded at last in equalising the position of the Latin clergy in several places in Syria, where they preserve professed relics of Christianity, with that of the Greek clergy, who regard themselves as being under the immediate protection more especially of the emperor of Russia. In the early part of 1850, the wrangling of the Greeks to retain their precedency, and of the Latins to acquire equality, attracted the attention of the British representative at Constantinople, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who was assured by general Aupick that the matter in dispute

was a mere question of property and of expressed treaty stipulation. At this time Lord John Russell instructed the British ambassador at Paris that her majesty's government would strictly abstain from entering into the merits of the dispute, but they should disapprove of every threat, and still more of the actual employment of force. It is needless to trace the course of this dispute between Russia and France, although it is desirable to understand the fact that, in the first instance, the question between Russia and Turkey was raised by the endeavour of the French government to obtain a better position and a more distinct recognition for the Latin clergy. In the first instance, the emperor of Russia appears to have been actuated only by a desire to uphold for his protégés, the Greek clergy, their monopoly and their precedency in Syria: and it was not until the French ambassador at Constantinople, M. Lavalette, began to talk of sustaining the French pretensions by the aid of troops, that the czar on his side began to talk of coercion. In a conversation repeated to Sir Hamilton Seymour, he remarked that "the Russian flag had been insulted;" a remark which will, perhaps, remain among the puzzles of history, since there does not appear to have been any act whatever that could have been construed into an insult to the Russian flag. From this point the emperor Nicholas took a more active course.

The first outward act was the arrival of Prince Mentchikof in Constantinople, with some remarkable peculiarities in the distribution of his honorary visits. On the 2nd of March he paid a ceremonial visit to the grand vizier and to the patriarch, but none to Fuad Effendi, the foreign minister; and when Lord Stratford de Redcliffe returned to his post in April, he found the Porte embroiled with its troublesome visitor. At this time Lord Stratford de Redcliffe was endeavouring to urge upon the Porte those councils of moderation which he never pretermitted, and to which, upon the whole, the Turkish government conformed with much sagacity and perseverance. He succeeded so well, that on the 22nd of April he reported the dispute respecting the Holy Places in the East as being "virtually adjusted," and Count Nesselrode acknowledged as much in the conversation with the British ambassador at St. Petersburg: the question, he said, was closed.



It was not, however, until the publication of certain papers\* in 1854, that the real course of Russian policy was clearly understood. Prince Mentchikof appeared in Constantinople to urge the enforcement of certain stipulations, principally the right to the custody of certain holy places in the East, the repair of a Christian church in Constantinople, and the right of the Greek Christians to have their grievances represented by the Russian minister. Prince Mentchikof continued to urge these demands in various forms with great variation of *manner*, at one time being haughty and threatening, at another mild and conciliatory; at one time urging the more limited form of his demands, at another claiming not only that the Russian ambassador should "represent" the grievances of the Christians, but that he should decide upon them. While these transactions were going on in Constantinople, those who watched them with some anxiety from a distance were not a little perplexed by the constant variation in the outward demeanour of the Russian representative. It was evident that he had in view some object beyond that which had been avowed; and now that we have this object distinctly revealed, we can perceive the unity of the spirit which actuated Prince Mentchikof through all the diversities of his manner. It was on the 9th of May that he sent in his official note demanding for the members of the orthodox Eastern religion the privileges and immunities assigned to them *ab antiquo*, with participation in all the advantages accorded to other Christian sects in Turkish dominions, and a formal treaty to re-establish the relations of Russia and the Porte. We need not now dwell upon this note to show how, pretending to rely upon the treaty of Kainardji, the Russian minister demanded stipulations which had been expressly excluded from that treaty—amongst others, the right of the Russian minister to adjudicate upon the claims of Christians; but it may be observed that the Mentchikof note was so worded, that under its cover every immunity which might be granted, separately, to any Christian sect within the Turkish dominions, under whatsoever peculiar and local circumstances, would have been accumulated in favour of the orthodox

\* Namely, the "Secret and Confidential Communications respecting Turkey made to her Majesty's Government by the Emperor of Russia, with the Answers returned to them, from January to April, 1853."

Greek Christians ; that the right of adjudication would have constituted the emperor virtual sovereign over the Greek Christians ; and that all these powers were to be obtained in favour of that sect of Christians called " orthodox," which has distinguished itself by cruel persecutions of other Christian sects. The Porte refused compliance with the note, on the score that it would invade the independence of the Ottoman empire, and that it demanded guarantees far beyond anything in the existing treaties with Russia. The governments of Prussia and Austria expressed to the British representatives at Berlin and Vienna, at the end of May, the opinion that the objections taken by the Ottoman ministers were valid ; and the same opinions were expressed by the representatives of the four powers at Constantinople.

The representatives of the four powers at Vienna, acting under instructions from their governments, formed themselves into a conference, and composed that first Vienna note which was simultaneously submitted to the acceptance of Russia and of the Porte. There is but very little doubt that the object in the composition of this note was to reconcile the independence of Turkey with the self-love of Russia, in the form of a concession, recognising the czar as the Christian patron of Russians, but limiting the obligations of Turkey to the stipulations of the existing treaties of Kainardji and Balta Liman. The Turkish government, however, found that the note would practically furnish a text under which Russia might make good some of the encroachments that she had already shown so strong a disposition to enforce ; the Porte, therefore, suggested modifications in the note to prevent that danger ; and the conference of Vienna so thoroughly approved of those modifications as to accept them, and to embody them in a new note.

The ulterior objects which the emperor Nicholas had already permitted to appear in his private conversations with Sir Hamilton Seymour, are enough to explain why he instantly accepted the first form of the Vienna note, and as peremptorily rejected the second form. But there were other motives besides his desire not to give up the ulterior objects. Throughout all these negotiations, nothing was more apparent than a personal pride in the emperor Nicholas. He was extremely indignant that Turkey should be permitted

to make modifications in a document which he happened to have accepted. As it was not easy to understand the precise nature of this repugnance, it was at first impossible to suppose that in great affairs of state the emperor should be actuated by exactly the same vulgar pride which would make a purse-proud individual in ordinary society indignant at being treated on a level with a person poorer, or "inferior" in rank. More than once afterwards, Nicholas made the gravest complaints at the proposal that a Russian minister should meet a Turkish minister, as if the two states were on an equality. That *he* should be invited to treat with Turkey, he regarded as personal insult; an outrage the more galling, since it was proposed by England and France. In the conversation with Sir Hamilton Seymour, on the 24th of December, Count Nesselrode said, "the conduct pursued towards the Russian cabinet was unheard of—the *sultan* was consulted as to the conditions upon which he was disposed to make peace!" "Then, again, the idea of asking Russia to send a plenipotentiary to meet a Turkish plenipotentiary under the auspices of the allied ministers was perfectly novel—was an indignity which would be offered only to one of the smallest of the European states—was a course which during the last hundred years Russia had never submitted to in her intercourse with Turkey, and to which she could not now be expected to lend herself." His idea was that a Turkish minister should go to St. Petersburg to submit his proposals and learn the pleasure of the czar. The same spirit comes out more distinctly, it will be seen, in the secret correspondence, where he calls the sultan "*ce monsieur*;" a phrase which has a slang acceptance of familiarity approaching to contempt, as if he had called his brother sovereign "that Mr. Sultan."

Painfully solicitous to avoid the dreaded contingency of an European war, the Vienna conference laboured for weeks upon the reconsideration and reconstruction of its proposals, in order to coax the text into such a form as would gratify the self-love of the emperor, without sacrificing the practical independence of the Porte. While the conference was thus striving to accomplish an unattainable result, the Porte firmly adhered to its determination of sustaining its own independence,—a determination in which it had the approval of the four powers; and it also persevered in using the

most moderate language and the most respectful deference for the advice of its allies.

Russia in the mean while also proceeded with her predetermined course. Prince Mentchikof left Constantinople for Bessarabia, and strong forces were advanced into the principalities of Moldavia and Vallachia, not to make war, it was said, but to hold these provinces of Turkey as a "material guarantee" until the czar should obtain satisfaction for his moral requirements and his spiritual anxieties on behalf of Greek orthodoxy. The people of England were unable to understand this subtle distinction, but not so their government, which manifested its casuistic acumen and its confidence in the tractability of Russia, by ordering the British fleet to remain inactive in the Turkish waters, until the placid dream was dispelled by news of the total destruction of the sultan's fleet at Sinope under circumstances of great atrocity.

The tiger-like cruelty which characterised this exploit of the Russians roused a very strong feeling in the British people; and the government professed fully to share that feeling. Our ministers had been accused of backwardness in affording substantial aid to Turkey. The advance of the joint French and English fleet, first to Besika Bay, and then, on the occupation of the principalities, to the Dardanelles, was popularly regarded as a compliance with duty in form rather than in fact; and the Turks themselves could not have entertained more serious doubts of the sincerity of our ministers than did multitudes in this country. The outrage at Sinope was the finishing stroke to the excessive forbearance which the Western Powers had shown to Russia; Lord Clarendon not only addressed a very spirited despatch to Sir Hamilton Seymour, but orders were sent to the joint fleet to take complete military possession of the Black Sea, and to drive into port any Russian war-ship that might show itself. Indignant at this infraction of his "rights as a belligerent," the emperor Nicholas ordered his ambassadors in Paris and London to ask of the French and British governments whether the blockade was not to be equal—whether Turkish as well as Russian ships were not to be prevented from conveying stores and reinforcements? "Turkey," replied Lord Clarendon, "would not be sanctioned in active hostilities



by sea; but neither would Turkish ships be prevented from conveying stores and reinforcements; for the cases were not equal, Russia being the assailant, and Turkey the weaker state." There is no doubt that a similar answer was returned by the French government; the two governments of France and England having, throughout the affair, acted with the most complete accord. From this time the Russian government assumed a much more positively hostile action: the ambassadors of that power were ordered to leave Paris and London; a series of angry papers appeared in the official newspaper of the czar, the *Journal of St. Petersburg*; and finally, on the 2nd of March, appeared that recapitulation of the Russian case which, to prove that France and England had from the first been informed of the czar's intentions, distinctly announced the existence of the secret communications, including a complete statement of the emperor's intentions. The existence of this correspondence was not unknown in London; the fact that the emperor had given most unusual explanations, and had claimed to be believed "as a gentleman," was not unfrequently alluded to by those who were acquainted with the circumstances; but ministers believed themselves to be under an obligation to reserve communications which had passed confidentially. The challenge in the *St. Petersburg Gazette* absolved them from that responsibility; the secret papers were laid before Parliament, the public learned at once the full extent of Russian treachery, the whole enormity of the frauds practised by a great potentate on contemporary monarchs, and the straightforward independence which our ministers had shown.

Nay, it was not until after the publication of these reserved papers that ministers themselves understood the full nature of the delusion. The study of the papers is one of the most instructive which can engage the student of history or politics. By the memorandum which the emperor Nicholas left with our government on his visit in 1844, it might be considered that he stood morally pledged to uphold the Turkish empire as long as possible; but it will be observed, from a comparative survey of his deliberately-prepared professions and of his actions, that those declarations which others regarded as moral pledges, he used as blinds. In the conversations which he had with Sir Ha-

milton Seymour, he began by insinuating a participation of England and Russia in the most nefarious breach of his own memorandum of 1844; and failing to obtain the complicity of England, he left her with the impression, created by assurances sometimes conveyed in the more solemn form of warnings, that he should not do the very things he was already at work upon. His whole course of behaviour to Sir Hamilton Seymour exactly resembles that of a practised hand in lawless acts, breaking the ice with one whom he wants to make an accomplice. He begins metaphorically, by talking of Turkey as "a sick man," a man so sick that he is "about to die." This device is very ancient: the Venetian government gave out that their inconvenient prisoner, Carrara, had a severe catarrh; Prince Arthur of England was described by John as sick; and in more modern times vulgarer culprits have reported the sickness of children, for example, doomed to benefit their parents by the medium of the burial club. The wily Nicholas said that he had no desire to hasten the death of the sick man—Heaven forefend! these people never have such desires; but seeing the probability of the event, he wished to prevent confusion by preparing for it. Anxious to prevent the indecency of quarrelling at the funeral about the will, he proposes that England and he should make Turkey's will for her. He is desirous of nothing for himself, only he has no objection that England should take Egypt and Candia. And all this, he repeats, when English ministers revolt from the poisonous suggestion, is not to hasten the death of the sick man—not to get anything for himself, but only to prevent scandal at the funeral, and to have England with him. *That* is all he is anxious about—he protests it is. For Austria is "identical" in interest with Russia; as to Prussia, he does not think it worth while to speak; and as to the emperor Napoleon, "this No. III.," he does not care at all—he is ready to defend Turkey against France. So he says to England. England still repels him, and he half unsays his hints, averring that he only desires to protract the evil day of Turkey's dissolution, and agreeing with our ministers that in order to do so, peremptory demands must not be pressed upon Turkey.

While he is thus talking, he is actually preparing the

peremptory demands which Prince Mentchikof urged in Constantinople, and the armies which were to seize the material guarantee. And after he had used this language to England, secretly, but without success, he goes to France with similar proposals; only in this instance, it is believed, offering, besides a partition of Turkey, the Rhine provinces, which France has so long regarded as her right. Thus he bends to ask the complicity of the despised emperor of the French, whom he had not deigned to call "sir, my brother," but to whom he now offers, as the price of co-operation, those provinces which belong to his own ally and dear brother-in-law the king of Prussia. And oh, depth of humiliation! the great emperor of all the Russias, who regards the Euxine as a Russian lake, and sets his foot upon Sweden to seize the reversion of Denmark—who treats Austria as his dependent, and Prussia as his vassal,—who is indignant at being asked to treat with "*ce monsieur*" the sultan, and cares nothing for France if England will but join him,—is exposed in his vain attempts to purchase the complicity of our island government, and is repulsed in his overtures to "Number III."

We have already given the substance of the famous note of 1844, and here we subjoin an abstract of the "Secret Correspondence."

SIR G. H. SEYMOUR TO LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

"St. Petersburg, Jan. 11, 1853.

"My Lord,—On the evening of the 9th instant, I had the honour of seeing the emperor at the palace of the grand-duchess Helen, who, it appeared, had kindly requested permission to invite lady Seymour and myself to meet the imperial family.

"The emperor came up to me in the most gracious manner, to say that he had heard with great pleasure of her majesty's government having been definitely formed; adding, that he trusted the ministry would be of long duration. His imperial majesty desired me particularly to convey this assurance to the earl of Aberdeen, with whom, he said, he had been acquainted for nearly forty years, and for whom he

entertained equal regard and esteem. His majesty desired to be brought to the kind recollection of his lordship.

“‘You know my feelings,’ the emperor said, ‘with regard to England. What I have told you before I say again: it was intended that the two countries should be upon terms of close amity; and I feel sure that this will continue to be the case. You have now been a certain time here, and, as you have seen, there have been very few points upon which we have disagreed; our interests, in fact, are upon almost all questions the same.’

“I observed, that I really was not aware that since I had been at St. Petersburg there had been any actual disagreements whatever between us, except with regard to Louis Napoleon’s No. III.; a point respecting which each government had its own opinion (*manière de voir*), but a point which, after all, was very immaterial.

“‘The No. III.’, the emperor replied, ‘would involve a long explanation: I will, therefore, not touch upon the subject at present. I should be glad, however, that you should hear what I have to say upon the question, and will beg of you to call upon me some morning when I am a little free from engagements.’

“I, of course, requested that his majesty would be good enough to lay his orders upon me.

“In the mean time, the emperor went on to say—‘I repeat, that it is very essential that the two governments—that is, that the English government and I, and I and the English government—should be upon the best terms; and the necessity was never greater than at present. I beg you to convey these words to Lord John Russell. When we are agreed (*d’accord*), I am quite without anxiety as to the west of Europe; it is immaterial what the others may think or do. As to Turkey, that is another question; that country is in a critical state, and may give us all a great deal of trouble. And now I will take my leave of you:’ which his majesty proceeded to do by shaking hands with me very graciously.

“It instantly occurred to me that the conversation was incomplete, and might never be renewed; and, as the emperor still held my hand, I said, ‘Sir, with your gracious permission, I would desire to take a great liberty.’ ‘Certainly,’ his majesty replied; ‘what is it?—let me hear.’



“‘Sir,’ I observed, ‘your majesty has been good enough to charge me with general assurances as to the identity of views between the two cabinets, which assuredly have given me the greatest pleasure, and will be received with equal satisfaction in England; but I should be particularly glad that your majesty should add a few words which may tend to calm the anxiety with regard to the affairs of Turkey, which passing events are so calculated to excite on the part of her majesty’s government: perhaps you will be pleased to charge me with some additional assurances of this kind.’

“The emperor’s words and manner, although still very kind, showed that his majesty had no intention of speaking to me of the demonstration which he is about to make in the south. He said, however, at first with a little hesitation, but, as he proceeded, in an open, unhesitating manner—‘The affairs of Turkey are in a very disorganised condition: the country itself seems to be falling to pieces (*menace ruine*). The fall will be a great misfortune; and it is very important that England and Russia should come to a perfectly good understanding upon these affairs, and that neither should take any decisive step of which the other is not apprised.’

“I observed in a few words, that I rejoiced to hear that his imperial majesty held this language; that this was certainly the view I took of the manner in which Turkish questions are to be treated.

“‘Tenez,’ the emperor said, as if proceeding with his remark—‘tenez; nous avons sur les bras un homme malade—un homme gravement malade; ce sera, je vous le dis franchement, un grand malheur si, un de ces jours, il devait nous échapper, surtout avant que toutes les dispositions nécessaires fussent prises. Mais enfin ce n’est point le moment de vous parler de cela.’\* ”

“It was clear that the emperor did not intend to prolong the conversation: I therefore said—‘Votre majesté est si gracieuse qu’elle me permettra de lui faire encore une ob-

\* “Stay: we have on our hands a sick man—a very sick man: it will be, I tell you frankly, a great misfortune if, one of these days, he should slip away from us, especially before all necessary arrangements were made. But, however, this is not the time to speak to you on that matter.”

servation. Votre majesté dit que l'homme est malade : c'est bien vrai, mais votre majesté daignera m'excuser si je lui fais observer que c'est à l'homme généreux et fort de ménager l'homme malade et faible.\*

"The emperor then took leave of me, in a manner which conveyed the impression of my having at least not given offence, and again expressed his intention of sending for me on some future day. . . .

"Your lordship will pardon me if I remark, that, after reflecting attentively upon my conversation with the emperor, it appears to me that this, and any overture of the kind which may be made, tends to establish a dilemma by which it is very desirable that her majesty's government should not allow themselves to be fettered. The dilemma seems to be this—If her majesty's government do not come to an understanding with Russia as to what is to happen in the event of the sudden downfall of Turkey, they will have the less reason for complaining if results displeasing to England should be prepared: if, on the contrary, her majesty's government should enter into the consideration of such eventualities, they make themselves in some degree consenting parties to a catastrophe which they have so much interest in warding off as long as possible.

"The sum is probably this, that England has to desire a close concert with Russia with a view to preventing the downfall of Turkey; while Russia would be well pleased that the concert should apply to the events by which this downfall is to be followed.

"I have, &c.,  
(Signed) "G. H. SEYMOUR.

"P.S.—Since this despatch was written, I have heard from the Austrian minister, that the emperor has spoken to him of the conversation which he had held with me. 'I told Sir Hamilton Seymour,' his majesty said, 'that the new ministry appears to me to be strong, and that I am anxious for its duration; although, to say the truth, as regards England, I

\* "Your majesty is so gracious that you will allow me to make one further observation. Your majesty says the man is sick: it is very true, but your majesty will deign to excuse me if I remark, that it is the part of the generous and strong man to treat with gentleness the sick and feeble man."

have learned that it is the country with which we must be allied—we must not lean to this or that party.’

“G. H. S.”

On the 14th of January, Sir Hamilton Seymour was summoned to the emperor, and had a long conversation.

“ ‘You know,’ his majesty said, ‘the dreams and plans in which the empress Catharine was in the habit of indulging: these were handed down to our time; but while I inherited immense territorial possessions, I did not inherit those visions, those intentions, if you like to call them so. On the contrary, my country is so vast, so happily circumstanced in every way, that it would be unreasonable in me to desire more territory or more power than I possess: on the contrary, I am the first to tell you that our great, perhaps our only danger, is that which would arise from an extension given to an empire already too large.

“ ‘Close to us lies Turkey, and in our present condition nothing better for our interests can be desired; the times have gone by when we had anything to fear from the fanatical spirit or the military enterprise of the Turks; and yet the country is strong enough, or has hitherto been strong enough, to preserve its independence, and to ensure respectful treatment from other countries.

“ ‘Well, in that empire there are several millions of Christians, whose interests I am called upon to watch over (*surveiller*), while the right of doing so is secured to me by treaty. I may truly say that I make a moderate and sparing use of my right; and I will freely confess that it is one which is attended with obligations occasionally very inconvenient; but I cannot recede from the discharge of a distinct duty. Our religion, as established in this country, came to us from the East; and there are feelings, as well as obligations, which never must be lost sight of.

“ ‘Now Turkey, in the condition which I have described, has by degrees fallen into such a state of decrepitude, that, as I told you the other night, eager as we all are for the prolonged existence of the man (and that I am as desirous as you can be for the continuance of his life, I beg you to believe), he may suddenly die upon our hands (*nous rester sur les bras*). We cannot resuscitate what is dead; if the

Turkish empire falls, it falls to rise no more; and I put it to you, therefore, whether it is not better to be provided beforehand for a contingency, than to incur the chaos, confusion, and the certainty of a European war, all of which must attend the catastrophe if it should occur unexpectedly, and before some ulterior system has been sketched. This is the point to which I am desirous that you should call the attention of your government.'

" 'Sir,' I replied, 'your majesty is so frank with me, that I am sure you will have the goodness to permit me to speak with the same openness. I would then observe, that deplorable as is the condition of Turkey, it is a country which has long been plunged in difficulties supposed by many to be insurmountable. With regard to contingent arrangements, her majesty's government, as your majesty is well aware, objects, as a general rule, to taking engagements upon possible eventualities, and would, perhaps, be particularly disinclined to doing so in this instance. If I may be allowed to say so, a great disinclination (*répugnance*) might be expected in England to disposing by anticipation (*d'escompter*) of the succession of an old friend and ally.'

" 'The rule is a good one,' the emperor replied, 'good at all times, especially in times of uncertainty and change, like the present; still it is of the greatest importance that we should understand one another, and not allow events to take us by surprise. *Maintenant je désire vous parler en ami et en gentleman; si nous arrivons à nous entendre sur cette affaire, l'Angleterre et moi, pour le reste, peu m'importe; il m'est indifférent ce que font ou pensent les autres. Usant donc de franchise, je vous dis nettement, que si l'Angleterre songe à s'établir un de ces jours à Constantinople, je ne le permettrai pas. Je ne vous prête point ces intentions, mais il vaut mieux dans ces occasions parler clairement: de mon côté, je suis également disposé de prendre l'engagement de ne pas m'y établir, en propriétaire, il s'entend, car en dépositaire je ne dis pas; il pourrait se faire que les circonstances me missent dans le cas d'occuper Constantinople, si rien ne se trouve prévu, si l'on doit tout laisser aller au hasard.*'\*

\* "Now I desire to speak to you as a friend and as a *gentleman*. If England and I arrive at an understanding of this matter, as regards



“ I thanked his majesty for the frankness of his declarations, and for the desire which he had expressed of acting cordially and openly with her majesty’s government; observing at the same time, that such an understanding appeared the best security against the sudden danger to which his majesty had alluded. I added, that although unprepared to give a decided opinion upon questions of such magnitude and delicacy, it appeared to me possible that some such arrangement might be made between her majesty’s government and his majesty, as might guard, if not for, at least against, certain contingencies. To render my meaning more clear, I said further—‘ I can only repeat, sir, that, in my opinion, her majesty’s government will be indisposed to make certain arrangements connected with the downfall of Turkey; but it is possible that they may be ready to pledge themselves against certain arrangements which might in that event be attempted.’ . . . .

“ The other topics touched upon by the emperor are mentioned in another despatch. With regard to the extremely important overture to which this report relates, I will only observe, that as it is my duty to record impressions as well as facts and statements, I am bound to say, that if words, tone, and manner, offer any criterion by which intentions are to be judged, the emperor is prepared to act with perfect fairness and openness towards her majesty’s government. His majesty has, no doubt, his own objects in view; and he is, in my opinion, too strong a believer in the imminence of dangers in Turkey. I am, however, impressed with the belief, that in carrying out those objects, as in guarding against those dangers, his majesty is sincerely desirous of acting in harmony with her majesty’s government.

“ I would now submit to your lordship, that this overture

the rest, it matters little to me; it is indifferent to me what others do or think. Frankly, then, I tell you plainly, that if England thinks of establishing herself one of these days at Constantinople, I will not allow it. I do not attribute this intention to you, but it is better on these occasions to speak plainly: for my part, I am equally disposed to take the engagement not to establish myself there, as proprietor, that is to say, for as trustee I do not say: it might happen that circumstances, if no previous provision were made, if everything should be left to chance, might place me in the position of occupying Constantinople.”

cannot with propriety pass unnoticed by her majesty's government. It has been on a first occasion glanced at, and on a second distinctly made by the emperor himself to the queen's minister at his court; whilst the conversation held some years ago with the duke of Wellington proves that the object in view is one which has long occupied the thoughts of his imperial majesty. If, then, the proposal were to remain unanswered, a decided advantage would be secured to the imperial cabinet, which, in the event of some great catastrophe taking place in Turkey, would be able to point to proposals made to England, which, not having been responded to, left the emperor at liberty, or placed him under the necessity, of following his own line of policy in the East." . . .

At a party on the 20th February, the emperor accosted Sir Hamilton: "'Well, you have got your answer, and you are to bring it to me to-morrow?'"

"'I am to have that honour, sir,' I answered; 'but your majesty is aware that the nature of the reply is very exactly what I had led you to expect.'"

"'So I was sorry to hear; but I think your government does not well understand my object. I am not so eager about what shall be done when the sick man dies, as I am to determine with England what shall not be done upon that event taking place.'"

"'But, sir,' I replied, 'allow me to observe, that we have no reason to think that the sick man (to use your majesty's expression) is dying. We are as much interested as we believe your majesty to be in his continuing to live; while, for myself, I will venture to remark, that experience shows me that countries do not die in such a hurry. Turkey will remain for many a year, unless some unforeseen crisis should occur. It is precisely, sir, for the avoidance of all circumstances likely to produce such a crisis, that her majesty's government reckons upon your generous assistance.'"

"'Then,' rejoined the emperor, 'I will tell you, that if your government has been led to believe that Turkey retains any elements of existence, your government must have received incorrect information. I repeat to you, that the sick man is dying; and we can never allow such an event to take us by surprise. We must come to some understanding; and that we should do, I am convinced, if I could hold but ten

minutes' conversation with your ministers—with Lord Aberdeen, for instance, who knows me so well ; who has full confidence in me, as I have in him. And remember, I do not ask for a treaty or a protocol ; a general understanding is all I require—that between gentlemen is sufficient ; and in this case I am certain that the confidence would be as great on the side of the queen's ministers as on mine. So no more for the present.'

"It is hardly necessary that I should observe to your lordship that this short conversation, briefly but correctly reported, offers matter for most anxious reflection.

"It can hardly be otherwise but that the sovereign who insists with such pertinacity upon the impending fall of a neighbouring state, must have settled in his own mind that the hour, if not *of* its dissolution, at all events *for* its dissolution, must be at hand. Then, as now, I reflected that this assumption would hardly be ventured upon unless some, perhaps general, but at all events intimate understanding, existed between Russia and Austria.

"Supposing my suspicion to be well founded, the emperor's object is to engage her majesty's government, in conjunction with his own cabinet and that of Vienna, in some scheme for the ultimate partition of Turkey, and for the exclusion of France from the arrangement."

Next day, another interview took place, by appointment, and Sir Hamilton Seymour read to the emperor the despatch of Lord John Russell. The emperor interrupted the reading to express with renewed energy the extreme probability of the downfall of Turkey—from an external war, a feud between the old Turkish party and that of the "new superficial French reforms," or a Christian rising. He then, after some hesitation, explained his ideas upon the negative policy.

"Well, there are several things which I never will tolerate : I will begin by ourselves. I will not tolerate the permanent occupation of Constantinople by the Russians : having said this, I will say that it never shall be held by the English, or French, or any other great nation. Again, I never will permit an attempt at the reconstruction of a Byzantine empire, or such an extension of Greece as would render her a powerful state ; still less will I permit the

breaking up of Turkey into little republics, asylums for the Kossuths and Mazzinis, and other revolutionists of Europe: rather than submit to any of these arrangements, I would go to war, and as long as I have a man and a musket left would carry it on. These,' the emperor said, 'are at once some ideas; now give me some in return.' "

In turn, Sir Hamilton Seymour suggested that Turkey might remain as it were under seals, until some arrangement should be made. But that, the emperor said, would be difficult. Sir Hamilton said, his majesty looked to the fall of Turkey, while England looked to Turkey's remaining where she is, and to preventing her condition from becoming worse. "Ah," replied the emperor, "that is what the chancellor is perpetually telling me."

"His imperial majesty spoke of France. 'God forbid,' he said, 'that I should accuse any one wrongfully, but there are circumstances both at Constantinople and Montenegro which are extremely suspicious: it looks very much as if the French government were endeavouring to embroil us all in the East, hoping in this way the better to arrive at their own objects, one of which, no doubt, is the possession of Tunis.'

"The emperor proceeded to say, that, for his own part, he cared very little what line the French might think proper to take in eastern affairs, and that little more than a month ago he had apprised the sultan that if his assistance was required for resisting the menaces of the French, it was entirely at the service of the sultan!

"In a word, the emperor went on to observe—'As I before told you, all I want is a good understanding with England, and this not as to what shall but as to what shall not be done: this point arrived at, the English government and I, I and the English government, having entire confidence in one another's views, I care nothing about the rest.'

"I remarked, that I felt confident that her majesty's government could be as little disposed as his imperial majesty to tolerate the presence of the French at Constantinople: and being desirous, if possible, of ascertaining whether there was any understanding between the cabinets of St. Petersburg and Vienna, I added, 'But your majesty has forgotten



Austria: now all these eastern questions affect her very nearly; she, of course, would expect to be consulted.'

"'Oh!' replied the emperor, greatly to my surprise, 'but you must understand that when I speak of Russia, I speak of Austria as well: what suits the one suits the other: our interests as regards Turkey are perfectly identical.'"

Again disclaiming the visions of ambition of the empress Catharine, he said, "*ce monsieur*" the sultan had broken his word; yet the emperor had only sent an ambassador, when he might have sent an army—there was nothing to stop him. If the sultan lost his throne, he would lose it for ever; "Turkey is a thing to be tolerated, not reconstructed." "In such a cause, I protest to you, I would not permit a pistol to be fired."

"The emperor went on to say, that in the event of the dissolution of the Ottoman empire, he thought it might be less difficult to arrive at a satisfactory territorial arrangement than was commonly believed. 'The principalities are,' he said, 'in fact, an independent state under my protection; this might so continue. Servia might receive the same form of government. So again with Bulgaria. There seems to be no reason why this province should not form an independent state. As to Egypt, I quite understand the importance to England of that territory. I can then only say, that if, in the event of a distribution of the Ottoman succession upon the fall of the empire, you should take possession of Egypt, I shall have no objections to offer. I would say the same thing of Candia: that island might suit you, and I do not know why it should not become an English possession.'

"As I did not wish that the emperor should imagine that an English public servant was caught by this sort of overture, I simply answered, that I had always understood that the English views upon Egypt did not go beyond the point of securing a safe and ready communication between British India and the mother-country."

## CHAPTER LXXII.

## WAR WITH TURKEY—OPERATIONS ON THE DANUBE AND IN ASIA—DESTRUCTION OF THE TURKISH FLEET AT SINOPE.

IT was on the 3rd of July, 1853, that the Russian divisions marched into the Danubian principalities. Those rich corn countries were seized; taxes for the maintenance of eighty thousand troops were imposed by the czar upon four millions of the sultan's subjects, and contracts for nine months were based on these new imposts; the hospodars were deposed and a provisional administration was established, at the head of which was Prince Michael Gortchakof. The movement was made suddenly and rapidly. In the first instance, fifty thousand troops (one-third was cavalry, with seventy-two guns of large calibre) were pushed into Moldavia, as the advanced guard of the intended army of occupation. Two immense lines of march—one from the centre of European Russia, and another equally long, from the very confines of Asia, were all alive with armed men, succeeding each other, and pressing forward to a common destination.

By the 15th of July, instead of the seventy-two guns with which the Russians had entered the country, they possessed in Yassy alone 144 heavy pieces of artillery; and this great park and 40,000 men were instantly directed to advance upon the Danube. In another fortnight, having put this formidable column upon the march, Prince Gortchakof was 160 miles away, at Bukharest, exchanging compliments with the bishops, who had there assembled to give him welcome. Thus he was solemnly received in the respective chief cities of the two provinces. Between his stay in the first of these capitals and his arrival in the other, Ghika, the hospodar, had sent to the sultan a memorial of so equivocal a nature that it was considered a renunciation of the Ottoman allegiance. Under this impression, which was perhaps just, Abdul-Medjid deprived him at once of the title to that office, from the exercise of which he had already been practically excluded by the Russians. Ghika shortly afterwards explained his conduct, and was readmitted into partial confidence at Constantinople.

The czar felt that he had now taken steps from which he

could not recede without incurring humiliations abroad which might impair his authority at home, and, perchance, imperil his dynasty. The armaments of Russia, therefore, proceeded with such activity, that they were apparent to the most casual observation; and, not content with the resources in his hands, the autocrat decreed, on the 23rd of July, a new conscription of seven in the thousand. Meanwhile, a concentric despatch of troops was continued from all the southern provinces of the empire upon Bessarabia. They arrived, diseased, ill-provisioned, exhausted, after a desolating march of sometimes thousands of miles, over roadless countries.

The sultan had to provide against attacks in Asia, as well as to guard the European seat of his government. On the 23rd of June, Selim Pasha was nominated seraskier in Anatolia, and a large army was placed under his command. The choice of this officer was as unfortunate as that of Omer Pasha in Europe was judicious and happy. The first object was to provide against the advance of the Russians from Georgia along the southern shores of the Black Sea—an advance which, unopposed, would place Constantinople in a worse position than if the invaders, having forced the Balkans, lay encamped in the European province of Rumelia, which corresponds to the home counties of London. In this other position, the capital might still rescue the empire; and, with the allied fleets in the Bosphorus, and off the Golden Horn, might await events with tranquil defiance. More than this, a Russian army in Rumelia might be said to have crossed the Balkans only to perish. A victory near Adrianople, over a fresh and vigorous Anglo-French army, would, to those wearied troops, be a moral impossibility; while retreat over the mountains would offer the alternative of certain annihilation. But if a large force from the Trans-Caucasian provinces could succeed in pushing through Erzeroun and Trebizond, and occupying Anatolia, then both the channel of Constantinople and the straits of the Dardanelles would be effectually commanded by the enemy; the key of the entrance of the Black Sea would be in his hands; and he could imprison in those waters, or exclude from them, the maritime defenders of the Porte. A favourable moment would then allow the Russian legions to be thrown across into the very metropolis.

This Asiatic danger being averted, Omer Pasha was appointed the Turkish generalissimo in Europe; and so soon as the news of Prince Gortchakof's invasion had reached the divan, Omer was ordered to break down all the bridges over the Danube, and immediately to adopt what strategic measures he deemed advisable for the defence of the state. This was on the 11th of July. At that time the French were holding their camp at Helfaut, and we our camp at Chobham. There was a great and unaccustomed activity in all our dock-yards and arsenals. The same noise of preparation resounded in France. But the fleets were still in Besika Bay. It was still a time of political suspense; and while Omer Pasha was proceeding to the Danube, and Prince Gortchakof was exercising all the despotic powers of a conqueror in the Turkish territory beyond that river, actually pressing into his service by forced enlistment the very boyars whom he could not induce by persuasion to join the cause of the invaders; while the grand-duke Constantine was at Odessa, urging forward with vehemence the concentration of troops, the outfit of vessels, and the accumulation of all the means of an immediate and desperate struggle; while already the clash of arms began to be heard, and blood to flow, on the banks of the Danube;—war was yet nowhere declared, not even by Turkey. And to show the wonderful delusion of men's minds, we may mention that so late as the 17th of August, the Austrian consul-general at Bukharest announced in a letter, which was at once published, that he had received positive news of the establishment of peace.

Trade was not yet quite suspended, and corn was shipped from Odessa in very considerable quantities, just twelve days before the Austrian consul's very Austrian announcement. But great storms began now to sweep the Black Sea, while the presence and the proceedings of the Russians in Greater Wallachia imposed new difficulties on the export of grain from that important emporium. On the 25th, it was known that one thousand vessels would be required at the Sulineh Mouth to ship the arrears. It is therefore not surprising, if we take this as but a sample of the difficulties arising, that something very nearly approaching to a dearth was felt at the close of 1853.

Darker and darker, by swift gradations, became the colour



of events. The cholera and the hosts of general Lüders were heard of together in Bessarabia, and together they entered Braila. On the 1st of September the sultan ordered an immediate additional levy of 80,000 men, which was answered on the 24th by a ukase of the czar, calling out a new conscription, though he had, only two months and a day before, by a similar measure, torn so many thousands of his wretched serfs from their agricultural labours.

Four days after the sultan's hattî-sheriff, Prince Gortchakof, who was at Bukharest, about twenty-five miles from the great river which he had orders to pass, issued a proclamation, concluding with these extraordinary words:—"Russia is called to annihilate Paganism, and those who would oppose her in that sacred mission shall be annihilated with the Pagans! *Long life to the czar! Long life to the God of the Russians!*"

Two days after Prince Gortchakof's proclamation, the sentiments of the Vallachians might be conjectured from the proceedings to which the Russian general was obliged to resort. Several boyars were arrested on the charge of corresponding with Omer Pasha. And what if this were true? War was not declared; Russia herself was at pains to represent the invasion of the principalities as no invasion at all, but emphatically a peaceful occupation, executed without the least breach of amity between the czar and that potentate, who, besides, was certainly the sovereign of these boyars. Yet they are cast into prison for being but suspected of writing to a high officer in the service of their own monarch, the czar's good friend.

On the 10th, the French ambassador to the Porte became so uneasy, that, on his own responsibility, he ordered three French frigates, and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, yielding to his persuasions, ordered, in like manner, three English frigates, to ascend the Sea of Marmora, and to moor at the entrance of the Bosphorus. This was but a slight and scrupulous demonstration. Far more decisive advances of the enemy were progressively occurring; and Giurgevo, on the north bank of the Danube, facing Rustchuk, was selected, instead of Fokschani, at the base of the Crapack hills, to be the scene of the chief Russian camp. The mouths of the river were now filled with corn, which could not be exported.

These accumulations, on the 17th of September, amounted to 40,000 kilogrammes of white wheat, 9000 of red, 16,000 of maize, and 25,000 of rye.

The last fruitless diplomatic effort before Turkey declared war—an effort on the one side to come to an understanding, and on the other to overreach Europe—was the conference at Olmütz, where the czar tried his personal influence over the young emperor Francis Joseph. Nicholas arrived at Warsaw on the 20th of September, and thence reached Olmütz on the 23rd. Seven days later, he was again at Warsaw, disappointed and baffled, as it was commonly imagined, in all the objects of his late visit—a visit which had not been undertaken until envoy after envoy (each of a higher reputation than his predecessor) had failed at Vienna.

As if to alarm England, the exaggerated statements of Russia's power, and of her means of war, were accompanied by the announcement of occasional victories, menacing India in their results. Thus, we now heard how general Perofski, governor of Orenburg, had stormed Ahmetzi, *and had laid open the road to Khiva.*

It was not till the beginning of October that the sultan, who could wait no longer for the allies, and, indeed, no longer restrain the eagerness of his own people, formally declared war against Russia, and decreed that 150,000 fresh troops should be raised and organised at once for the defence of Islam. The czar, when this heroic act of the "sick man" was announced to him, declared that, "from that moment forth, *he retracted all his concessions.*" What his concessions had recently been to Turkey, or what concessions he meant, it would have been perplexing to determine.

The declaration of war could not have been further delayed. Even before it was possible for the news to have reached the Danube, about 1300 Redifs suddenly passed the river, and made a foray on the Russian side. They met part of Lüders' division, fought their way successfully back to the water's edge, and re-crossed in safety with their spoils.

Omer Pasha had been diligently employed in organising his wild troops since the early part of July; and, with the aid of some European officers (chiefly French), he soon saw himself at the head of an army in which he could place confidence, and which proved itself equal to all the exigencies of

the war. Having duly received notification that war was declared, he granted yet three weeks to all neutral flags to pass to and fro on the Danube, and proclaimed that this license would terminate on the 25th of the month then current, October. All Russian subjects resident in Turkey were placed under Austrian protection. The election of the monk Anthinos to the patriarchate of Constantinople, although he had two competitors of the Russian party, who would have given 60,000 piastres for the post—shows the feeling which at this date prevailed in the capital. There was no necessity for our fleets to remain where they unhappily did remain all that year. The Russians were diligently using the Black Sea as a highway for the movement of troops, the rearrangement of strategic posts, and the transit of provisions, arms, and ammunition. For example, 5000 Russian soldiers, whom the fleets might have intercepted, were landed in October at Redout Kaleh, to succour the army of the Caucasus, and to attack Batoum; and many operations, which subsequently entailed severe fighting and great bloodshed, in Asia as well as in Europe, were by our supineness and hesitation (for we could have paralysed in a moment all those movements) allowed to be quietly accomplished. On the 1st of November M. de la Cour was recalled, and general (now marshal) Baraguay d'Hilliers appointed ambassador at Constantinople on the part of the French emperor.

It was the next day (November 2nd) that Omer Pasha began to cross the Danube. A long line of river cannot, with equal forces, be so guarded as to hinder the enemy from somewhere crossing it in strength; but, firstly, such a position may be taken as to place him at a disadvantage when he does cross; and, secondly, the defender of the river may himself cross, and strike a heavy blow against the enemy in some unguarded and vulnerable point, and then return to watch for another chance. Omer Pasha adopted both these plans. Establishing securely his communications with the sea through Varna, and rendering Shumla, at the distance of thirty miles inland, impregnable, he collected such a force of infantry and artillery around and within easy reach of that powerful basis, that by always refusing, as military men say, the right wing of his position, and throwing the left forward, which it will be seen he did throughout, he was sure, *at the*

*very least*, of fulfilling his trust, and of defending the remainder of Turkey effectually. For of two things, one—either the troops thus thrown diagonally forward and outward from his left hand would succeed in defeating the Russians, in which case all was well; or the more advanced wing would have to retire. In this case it was diagonally drawn back as it had been thrown forward, gaining more and more strength as the Russians retained less and less, and as it approached the powerful basis of the position, viz., the right flank resting on Shumla, Varna, and the sea. Now either the Russians would, in that position, fight a general battle (and Omer Pasha could not be better pleased than by such a proceeding on their part), or they would retreat to secure their subsistence. To turn Omer Pasha's position by their right, which would be the furthest removed from their magazines and supports, and then, while his army lay unharmed and complete in their rear, to venture by a large circuit, first towards the west, and subsequently southwards, would be to allow him to destroy them at his leisure—which would probably be before they had arrived, starving, at the foot of the Balkans.

Having taken these defensive precautions, and having collected a disposable body sufficient for his purpose, he determined to divert the Russians from passing the Danube, by passing it himself. His sudden presence would compel the enemy to much marching and counter-marching, perhaps even to a great concentration of troops—operations not performed without serious fatigue, or without disturbing the combinations, and arresting the more general designs of the hostile commander. Besides all this, he might inflict some direct and severe loss on the enemy. But the great object was, by a bold movement, to animate and cheer his own troops, and to dispel the delusion of Russian superiority.

Omer Pasha's left wing stretched westward far beyond the junction of the Aluta, and hovered menacingly around Lesser Wallachia; and if Prince Gortchakof's commissariat had allowed him to collect the mass of his troops against the centre of so long a line (upwards of 200 miles), he might at once have split it into two, and forced the Danube. But, in war, time is of as much importance as space; and Omer Pasha was perfectly well informed of the state of the Russian



preparations. Add to this, that the enemy's position was so straggling as to make it less unsafe for him to diffuse and scatter his own, in pursuance of any objects then in view. Accordingly, he proceeded to seize an island far up the Danube, between Widdin and Kalafat, where a strong body belonging to his left wing intrenched themselves firmly. Prince Gortchakof could not conceive what was intended. He adjourned for the moment his own passage of the Danube, and even took measures to protect his right wing from being turned, and a disaster incurred in Lesser Vallachia. On the 1st of November he hurried to Slatina on the Aluta, and suspended or altered all the plans of his campaign. Omer Pasha saw that the effects of a diversion were produced. Since the 19th of October he had busily but secretly collected 200 gun-boats at Rustchuk, and with these he flung two or three thousand men across, who intrenched themselves near Giurgevo.

On the 2nd of November, and on the 3rd and 4th, he forced his passage fifteen miles lower down from Turtukai to Oltenitza with 13,000 men. The Russians were numerically much stronger. But they had been, in part, perplexed respecting the designs, and even respecting the presence of the Turkish generalissimo; in part, they were out-manœuvred during the actual operations, and in part they were beaten fairly on the field. The Turks forced the passage with artillery, held it manfully by the bayonet, and then secured it with spade and pickaxe. The conflict lasted, omitting the intervals which interrupted it, for three-and-twenty hours; and will ever be memorable under the name of the battle of Oltenitza.

The combat, and the manner of it, deserve a special description. At Turtukai, or just below it, the Danube is about 1200 yards across; but there is an island between the two shores, which island is distant 600 yards from the south, and 200 yards from the north bank. Now, as the Russian margin of the river is almost level with the water's edge, whereas the Turkish shore rises to the height of 600 feet, it is quite evident that the Russians, had they even occupied that island, could not have kept it for half an hour against the Turkish artillery from the opposite eminence. But they did not attempt to occupy it; a strong battery was erected

upon it by Omer, and the landing point was chosen not directly in front of the island, but lower down, and to the right, so that the battery mentioned should effectually protect the Turkish left, by enfilading its assailants. To protect the Turkish right the largest guns which Omer possessed were placed by him in battery on the south shore still lower down. They had to clear a range of 1200 yards. A little stream, called the Argish, flowing from the north, seems to refuse the Danube just as it is about to fall into that great river, and, taking a short parallel sweep to the east, then turns again to the south for a few yards, and effects its confluence. Here the Turks landed, at first only 3000 strong, and spreading somewhat to the left, had, of course, on that flank and in their rear the bending stream of the Argish. In front of their left and of their centre the ground was full of copsewood—in front of their right it was open. They had intrenched themselves by ten o'clock in the morning of November 2nd.

At eleven o'clock a cloud of Cossack skirmishers attacked them, and were followed by four columns of infantry and twenty cannon. Large masses of cavalry immediately afterwards appeared against the right of the Turks, the only part of the field where horse could manœuvre. We need say no more; the nature of the position speaks for itself. The Russians could on that day collect but 8000 men, and these were with ease repulsed; for, though the occupants of the intrenchments were but 3000, that number was sufficient, with the advantage of their field-works; and there was the protection of the river batteries besides. Next day the Russians were in greater number, but the Turks had also been reinforced incessantly, and, moreover, the intrenchments were stronger. Omer Pasha gained a second victory, precisely like the first. On the 4th of November the third and greatest attack was made. The Russians were now 30,000 strong, while Omer had flung into this venturesome and forward outpost all the men he could spare, amounting to 18,000.

A very protracted and desperate engagement ensued. There was what even Frenchmen and Englishmen would call real fighting. The Turkish left was impregnable, and as it was both very uninviting, and had in front of it covered

ground and brushwood, where the enemy lay, the carnage was here not great. But on the Turkish right, which was assailed over an open and level space, a fearful slaughter ensued. The Russian infantry tried to storm this side. When first advancing, they were mowed down in whole companies by the Turkish artillery from the south bank; on their nearer approach, the fire of the Turkish musketry, and even pistol shots, discharged from behind a cover which forbade any effective retaliation, continued to shake their array and thin their ranks. But "they would not be refused." They reached (in some disorder, it is true, and much weakened, but still they reached) the foot of the earthworks. At this time the Osmanlis had hardly lost a man since morning. A sudden shout arose among them, they leaped over their own intrenchments, and charged the astonished, decimated, and already half-broken assailants with the bayonet, routing them completely. The movement could not extend far, on account of the Russian cavalry, which prohibited all pursuit. In many respects, it was a very peculiar contest; and we can account for the smallness of the number slain on the side of the Turks. It is stated to have been under twenty. The Russians lost a thousand men. Omer Pasha, all this time, remained on his own side of the river. He had taken every measure in his power. He had done what he could do to ensure victory: and he now watched the varying phases of the action while smoking his pipe. He was quietly seated on the high ground with a celebrated stranger, who was present through motives of professional curiosity—general Prim, the Spaniard. They gazed on the scene through telescopes, seated, with their feet comfortably stretched towards a large wood fire. They saw the test-fight of an army hitherto untried, and they saw its victory.

After this event, the Turkish position seemed to be, for some time, that of assailants, much more than of men acting on the defensive. They occupied both sides of the Danube in the most important places. We have seen how they stood at Turtukai and Oltenitza. These Turks were but part of the same division which held Rustchuk and Giurgevo, and were led by Omer in person. Sistova, Nicopolis, and Rahova were also in their hands. They had, under the command of Ismail Pasha, crossed the river at Widdin, and not only had

seized Kalafat, but had entered Kalarasch with 4000 men. They had placed 2000 men on an island, as though they would hold both the banks, and likewise what lay between.

Nine days elapsed before the Russians ventured again to attack the Turkish redoubt between Oltenitza and the river. On the 11th they again assailed the stubborn intrenchments, general Engelhardt having arrived with the reserves. Being repulsed with loss, they then endeavoured to mask the position; and, by getting possession of the island for even an hour, to force this out-garrison, on their own bank, to lay down their arms. All these attempts were unsuccessful; and, on the 14th of November, they were even forced to look more to defence and less to attack; for, on that day, the Turks had the spirit and strength to make an outburst; and, having fallen upon Oltenitza itself, and ravaged its suburbs, retired without loss. On the 26th Omer Pasha established a bridge between the south shore and the island of Mokan or Mokannon, higher up the Danube, not far from Giurgevo; and, about the same time, he withdrew the troops which were in position on the farther bank in front of Turtukai, and under Oltenitza; and though retaining also the island of Ramadan, he was obliged to concentrate his soldiers rather more, in the face of the ever-increasing numbers of the enemy. But whilst he was reducing the length of his line, he took care both to conceal the movement, and to strike whatever blows fortune permitted. He still held Kalafat, while, at a distance of nearly three hundred miles from that position by the convex road which he was obliged to use (though at a much shorter distance through Vallachia), he gave the Russians a severe check at Matchin, in the north of the Dobrudsha, facing Braila. The enemy began to respect a man to whom they ascribed the endowment of ubiquity.

The Russians imagined that they had built a house, where they indeed had but pitched a tent; and, as if they were permanently fixed in the principalities, general Budberg was now nominated by the czar president of the civil administration of Moldavia. The appointment was worth one year's purchase.

A little incident occurred on the 17th of November in which we think we recognise Russian agency; we allude to the reconciliation, at Frohsdorf, between "Henry V." on the



one part, and (in the name of the whole Orleans family) the Duc de Nemours on the other. The reconciliation took place seven years too late. We doubt if it could ever have prevented the reign of Napoleon III.; but certainly it has not shaken his throne.

For a fortnight nothing of importance happened; though it is worth while to mention that the same Russian war-ship, *Vladimir*—whose daring and skilful sally afterwards from Sebastopol (when we supposed that port to be securely blockaded by the Anglo-French squadrons) extorted the admiration of Europe—that same ship *Vladimir*, on the 20th of November, 1853, spread terror along the Bulgarian coast, where she captured and carried away a Turkish pepper vessel and an Egyptian war-steamer of ten guns.

We need not pause long upon the infructuous, if not apocryphal, exploits in Asia of Selim Pasha, who was reported about the same date to have stormed Saffa, and to have won a battle at Gumri, or Alexandropol, on the 13th. Five days later Ali Pasha was beaten at Akhalzik by general Andronikof. A more decisive event now arrests our attention. The terrible 30th of November arrived. Six Russian ships of the line, with several smaller vessels of war, suddenly filled the aperture of the harbour of Sinope. There were in port thirteen Turkish sail, unprepared for action, and not expecting it. But had they even received warning, their whole fleet was no match for the six Russian first-rates, without counting the powerful frigates and other war craft by which they were supported. We must here observe that, when the sultan had declared that he was at war, he, in one sense, merely announced a fact; but, with a feeling not usually shown on such occasions, he added, that his was purely and essentially a defensive struggle; that he wished but to deliver his territories from the armed stranger and the invader, and that he would nowhere either violate the Russian frontiers, or seek to retaliate the aggression which he had suffered.

Admiral Nachimof commanded the Russian fleet at Sinope, and Osman Pasha the Turkish naval detachment. This last was, in a short time, burnt and destroyed. Seven frigates, one steam-frigate, two schooners, and three transports were, all except two, reduced to a shapeless heap of floating tim-

bers, blackened with gunpowder, stained with blood, and covered with mutilated human limbs, and the corpses of 5000 brave and unfortunate Turks, who, taken at fatal disadvantage, had fought to the last with unshaken heroism. In a few minutes after the action began the outer vessels of the Turkish detachment were blown "into one long port-hole." The feeble battery of Sinope, overhead, brought no succour. When its untimely guns were at length fired, some of their shot fell among the friends whom they were destined to protect. Admiral Nachimof's squadron sustained comparatively little injury, though some of the vessels showed how strenuous had been the unavailing resistance. A few Turks swam to land, and, clambering over the heights, escaped. Osman Pasha, before he could set fire to his own flagship, was taken prisoner, desperately wounded. The chief prizes which the Russians thought it still possible to remove, foundered while towed behind them in the Black Sea. Osman Pasha, whom they carried half dead to Sebastopol, expired there within six weeks from his arrival. The news of this event electrified all Europe. When it was known at St. Petersburg, the czar distributed naval decorations, ordered a solemn "Te Deum" in the churches, and published an exulting manifesto.

We have alluded to the unsatisfactory vicissitudes of the war in Asia. The Turkish forces destined to operate in Anatolia, Abasia, and Armenia, were in a state of demoralisation, which a consummate general, armed with unlimited authority, could not have at once repaired. General Guyon, our countryman, who had distinguished himself in the Hungarian war against Austria, and on whom had been conferred the Ottoman name and style of Kourshid Pasha, was, during all this time and for long afterwards, in a subordinate position, and was compelled to witness disasters which he was not permitted to avert. The river Arpatshy forms the frontier between the Russian conquests and the Turkish possessions in Asia. In this neighbourhood the doubtful struggle reeled to and fro, with much slaughter but small results, from July to December. In August, Mustapha Zarif Pasha, commander-in-chief of the army of Batoum, advanced from Kars, and attacked general Prince Bebutof without success. That officer, who appears to be a man of no mean ability, assumed

the offensive himself on the next day (August 5th), and defeated the Turks at Kurukdar, near Gumri. In July, general Bebutof had worsted Selim, at Bayazid, which stands between the sources of the Euphrates and those of the Araxes, communicating directly with Trebizond. General Bebutof, therefore, by this last exploit, opened the high road from Persia to Anatolia, by the south of Mount Ararat. At this time, such were the difficulties interposed by Shamyl in the Caucasus, that almost all the provisions and supplies of the Russians at Tiflis, and in advance of it, were conveyed to them by the precarious communications of the Caspian Sea; and, had a competent officer commanded the Turks in Kars, it is hard to say to what extremities the enemy might have been reduced. But nothing could exceed Selim Pasha's unfitness for his situation. This Selim (for there are two in the war of Asia) displayed from the first not even the courage of a common soldier. But let us describe the chief combat in this Asiatic war. While Bebutof lay in front of the main body of the Turks, some of Andronikof's division, greatly to the Turkish right, had defeated the outposts, and were truly reported to be stealing round by the rear of that flank towards Erzeroum. General Guyon, being asked his opinion, at a council of war summoned in haste and terror, advised an instantaneous advance, on the 4th of August, of the whole army upon Bebutof, and then a rapid return against the column behind, near Erzeroum. By this means the pasha could use all his force in succession against each of his divided enemies; but, by hesitation, he would soon allow them to press him, as it were, in a vice. Unfortunately, the 4th and 5th of August were esteemed unlucky days in the Turkish calendar, and the movement was delayed till the 6th. Between the Turks—who had been forced back from their former positions—and Kars, lay the enemy. Behind him rose the white towers of Gumri; and, beyond these, and on each side of them, shone the snow-crowned hills of Georgia. Thirty-five thousand Turks advanced at midnight, by the glimmer of torches, to surprise the Russian position; but treachery had preceded them, and they found that they were expected. It was a disgraceful day. Zarif Pasha lost heart and head at the first shot, and galloped about the field pale with terror himself, and terrifying his

followers. Resul Pasha fled at once, on the right flank. Vely Pasha, through jealousy of Guyon, neglected to take that brave soldier's advice, which would have retrieved the day. The superior officers deserted their men. Half an hour after the troops were engaged, none of the Bunbashis or Murailais (the colonels and the majors) were to be seen. The mountain battery which had seized the heights commanding the Russian right never fired a gun—never acted at all. Major Tevey, an American, who was there, expostulated in vain. Of the forty infantry battalions, the 5th Anatolian and the 4th Desardet regiments alone resisted cavalry. One man, and one man only, may be said to have behaved with real distinction—this was Tahir Pasha, in command of the Turkish artillery, which was admirably worked from first to last. Such was the fight beyond the hills of Hadji Veleky, where 35,000 Turks were ignobly defeated by 18,000 Russians, whom they had thought to take by surprise. No reliance can be placed on the conduct in the field of men who are pusillanimously as well as unskillfully officered and led.

General Bebutof had blown up the forts of Bayazid, as he wanted to use the garrisons in the field: such a measure would have saved Napoleon in 1813, and Charles I. in the Great Rebellion.

We may here mention that, at the first outbreak of hostilities, the Russians had evacuated their forts in another scene of this widely-scattered conflict—we mean along the eastern shore of the Black Sea, among the Tcherkessians of Circassia. These forts protected their most direct communications through the Caucasus and the Georgian provinces.

On the 20th of August, however, general Bebutof's combinations were disconcerted by the hero Shamyl—but for whom, indeed, Russia would, long since, have securely appropriated all the Turkish provinces on the south of the Black Sea. That indomitable man, with 20,000 Lesghian Circassians, broke into Georgia, and carried away hostages from Tiflis itself. This sort of excursion seems to be with him a regular annual operation. When most forgotten he is surest to be near. We return to Europe.

On the 20th of December, the Turks, who had recently struck a sharp blow at Matchin, in the northern Dobrud-



sha, at the extreme right of their line, were equally active and successful on its extreme left. They advanced from Kalarasch and stormed, though they meant not to keep it, the post of Karakal on the Aluta. They retired from it, and even from Kalarasch, but fortified themselves with unwearied assiduity in Widdin, Rahova, and Nicopolis, on their own side of the Danube. With respect to Matchin, Omer Pasha had still less desire to retain it. He never intended to occupy the Dobrudsha during the sickly months which were impending. On the contrary, he wished the Russians to lose themselves in that fatal position, and they did. Where he could strike, he struck; and, if the irritation of defeat, combined with the real facility of operation, should induce the enemy to advance, it was what he wished. He fixed his own head-quarters at Rustchuk, and awaited events.

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## CHAPTER LXXIII.

WAR WITH TURKEY—OPERATIONS ON THE DANUBE—BATTLE OF CITATE—ENGLAND AND FRANCE PUT THEIR FORCES IN MOTION.

THE severity of the weather, from the 22nd of December, rendered operations for some days impossible. It was the armistice of nature. About this time, Constantinople was racked with ministerial changes and political struggles. The Capudan Pasha was superseded by Halil Pasha, and some popular outbreak had seemed not improbable. The French ambassador offered the sultan the protection of the French fleet, but Abdul-Medjid replied magnanimously that "he would rather abdicate than accept foreign assistance against his own people." On Christmas-day the allied squadrons were still in Beicos Bay; and, though more decisive measures were contemplated by the maritime powers since the catastrophe of Sinope, the state of the Black Sea delayed the entrance of the fleets till the 4th of January. The union jack and the eagle were still reflected in the waters of the Bosphorus from the masts of a mighty but inactive armada.

The Russians had sustained many checks in the field. The spell of their arms was departing. But they announced how inadequate their preparations had been, how every day their position was strengthened, and in what irresistible force they would soon establish themselves throughout the scene of action. Two hundred thousand soldiers were to be poured into the principalities, and were, in fact, fast arriving at their destination, in spite of the horrors of long winter marches through a thousand obstacles.

Osten-Sacken's corps was marked and proclaimed with formidable regularity in all the stages of its approach. A sublime diary diversified the journals of Europe, describing the nearer and nearer progress of those invincible legions through ice and snow and storm, and amidst difficulties hardly to be conceived. For weeks the attention of the world tracked in suspense the awful advance. The troops, meantime, which were already in Vallachia, spread themselves (with very questionable strategy, not to speak of the impolicy of the demonstration) along the Austrian frontier, from Orsova nearly to Kronstadt, in Transylvania. Any one who but glances at a map will see the uselessness, the waste of men, the insanity of this disposition. Not such the conduct of Omer Pasha. Ever warily withdrawing, in reality, his right wing, he abandoned the northern Dobrudsha, and fixed upon Trajan's Wall as the limits of his first stand in that direction. This memorable barrier against the cognate barbarians of ancient times, extends, eastwards, from a little below Czernavoda, on the Danube, to Kustendjeh, on the coast. Just about that point the Danube, which has been flowing from east to west, takes a bend at right angles to the north, and encloses the Dobrudsha between its waters and the sea. At Galatz, some eighty miles further, it resumes, at another right angle, its former eastward course, and thus furnishes the western and northern boundaries of that vast morass called the Dobrudsha, of which the Euxine and Trajan's Wall, respectively, form the eastern and southern limitation. Behind Trajan's Wall Omer Pasha stationed a force sufficient to impose quarantine upon the advancing and pestilence-bearing invaders. It was a front of twenty miles to defend, or less; for it was not passable or practicable for more than two-

thirds of its extent; and this was under thirty miles. It was general Lüders who was to conduct the invasion on this side.

The Russians, having raised intrenchments at Bukharest, began a serious triple advance. One corps, 22,000 strong, was to attack Kalafat; a second was to occupy Karakal; and the third was to move down the Aluta, towards Turna. With these operations (and the withdrawal of the Russian fleet into Sebastopol) ended the year 1853. And in the opening days of the next year one of the most brilliant feats of arms in modern Turkish history astonished the world, and proved that vigour still was left in *the sick man*.

Of the three Russian corps, whose orders to execute a simultaneous advance we have mentioned, the westernmost was that which was ready to enter first into action. "The Pagans" stationed at Kalafat were those whom it was the special business of this column "to annihilate." It was commanded by general Fishback, under whom acted generals Engelhardt and Bellegarde; while Prince Vassilitchkof led the cavalry. Their whole corps consisted of but 22,000 men, of whom 7000 moved more slowly to act as a reserve, loitering near Karaul, on the left of the line of march. The operations continued still to evince the incapacity of the Russian generals. There was a neighbouring column, only a few miles to the left, as strong as their own. Had both been rapidly united, and flung together either upon Kalarasch, and so across to Rahova, or hurled in combination against Kalafat, resistance would have been clearly impossible. But they moved in parallel lines, each with its own distinct destination. But, doubtless, the operation which we have hinted, and which would have been very easy to French or English troops, required great celerity of movement. Otherwise, the dispersed Osmanlis would themselves have had time to make a corresponding concentration. Now, in celerity of movement the Russians are strikingly inferior even to the Turks. For commissariat reasons (and several others), it is extremely inconvenient and unadvisable to concentrate a very large body of men except *just before fighting*; and the time allowed by this last expression for an army of fifty, or even seventy thousand men (previously distributed at proper strategic points, or, in other words, well led), ought

not to be longer than twenty-four hours. All great generals have recognised this principle, and have tried so to arrange that they could, in the presence of the enemy, reduce it to practice. But what the French habitually do in twenty-four hours, the Russians, during this war, have frequently taken six, and even fourteen days to accomplish. Let us attend general Fishback in his present proceedings. Not being joined by the column on his left, nor by any of the idle garrisons to the rear of his right, and having disposed of seven thousand of his own men as a reserve, he found, when he arrived at Citate, that he had with him only fifteen thousand. Now, the Turks at Kalafat, whom he was going to attack, were intrenched; and no soldiers defend intrenchments better. Moreover, their force was numerically equal to his own; and, finally, they were in immediate communication with Widdin, across the Danube, and probably from Widdin would be largely supported. He began to doubt whether he was strong enough for his undertaking; the only wonder is that he had not entertained this doubt a week earlier. Accordingly, this intending assailant suddenly halted at Citate, and began to throw up intrenchments, not between the village and the Turks, but behind the village. In this deliberate manner he was occupied during the 4th and 5th of January, new style, and the assault upon Kalafat was postponed to the 13th, the Russian New Year's-day. Fishback would open the Julian year brilliantly; large reinforcements were demanded; the inactive columns on his right were summoned to join him from Radova, Orsova, and the Transylvanian frontier; and then a grand combined onslaught would drive the Turks into the Danube, or at the worst compel them to cross it, and seek refuge in Widdin. These proceedings clearly prove the justice of our criticism on the original plan,—which they stultify. A strategy which is always correcting itself must be bad; nor is even, in general, the correction good; for a wise measure, in war, is a wise measure only at the precise moment for it. Next day it is often as foolish as the blunder which it is meant to repair. The Russian generals are always busy each week with the measures which belong to the preceding week, for it is only a week afterwards that they discover what ought to have been done a week before; and then, with equal



folly, they do it, though it has become in its turn as unsuitable as their former measures. They are aware of an opening when they see an enemy cover it; and though it is no longer an opening (for the ward of the fencer is up), they thrust. On the other hand, they are themselves exposed; they know it not, but they suddenly feel the point, and then they parry in that guard to avert a lunge which is not coming—it has come already, and pierced home. Can these men be called generals?

The pashas, Achmet and Ismail, who commanded at Kalafat, were informed of all general Fishback's movements, and well knew that the intended attack of the 13th of January would be very serious. Resolute leaders of resolute troops, they yet looked forward with anxiety to an encounter with forty-five thousand Russians, exactly three times the number of their own force. They determined not to await the leisure of the Russians, or the ultimate danger of such an assault, but to sally forth at once, and to fight general Fishback at Citate, on more equal terms. At daybreak, therefore, on the 6th of January (Christmas-day in Russia), they marched from Kalafat. They had fifteen field-guns, ten thousand regular infantry, whom Ismail and Achmet Pashas themselves led in person; four thousand cavalry, commanded by Mustapha Bey; and a thousand Bashibozouks, under the coloneley of the gallant and adventurous Skender-Beg, of historic name. The road to Citate led through Roman, Galantza, Funtina, and Moglovitz. To prevent any surprise of Kalafat in their absence, Ismail had ordered over three thousand of the garrison of Widdin, as a temporary guard. He took the further precaution of leaving about an equal number of troops at Moglovitz, on the road, in order to maintain his communications, and at need protect his retreat, if he was beaten. By their help he would, at the worst, rally his force at Moglovitz. It was nine o'clock as the assailants entered Citate, in the streets of which were posted three thousand Russians and four guns. By a cross street the Turks brought some of their own pieces to play upon the defenders, and then Achmet charged them in front with his infantry. After the first onset, the Turks disdained the restraints of rank and file—restraints not suited to street fighting. The battle resembled a meeting of innumerable

pairs of duellists ; and for this species of close and personal action the Turks had the advantage in arms, in bodily vigour, and in courage. The Russian soldier possessed now no weapon but his bayonet, and was cumbrously accoutred. The agile Turk had the bayonet also, and if, in the crush, or the turns of the dense and wild struggle, a blade and its shorter thrust, or its cut, were more desirable, he instantly had the ready and national weapon in his hands. From house to house—storming every place out of the window of which a shot had been fired—from crossing to crossing—in-doors and out of doors—the assailants pressed back the Russians ; and, in three hours, had driven them into their intrenchments. Against these the Turks forthwith brought up their field-pieces, which, we believe, were as many as fifteen ; and here they suffered their principal loss that day. The cannonade was briskly sustained on both sides, and several bold assaults upon the works were repulsed. In the midst of this conflict, the Russian reinforcements from Karaul appeared. Had they arrived while the Turks were entering the village, they would, perhaps, have finished the action almost as soon as it had been begun. But now the position taken by those who were beleaguering the Russian trenches, and a part of whom faced about to meet the new enemy, must be reached through some suburban orchards and gardens ; and as the reserves ventured upon these, they were used as a natural intrenchment by the Turks—with this difference, that the defenders were prompt to sally from them. It was a curious position ; the Turks were, at the same moment, assailants in front, and on their defence in the rear ; and, while their original attack was repulsed, they were victorious over the attack against themselves. The hedges, the walls, every tree, every bush, served them as so many fortresses.

Meantime, Ismail Pasha, when he had driven the Russians out of the streets of Citate, had recollected the force he had left at Moglovitz, and bethought him with what object. His circumstances were now altered. He no longer contended for safety—he contended for victory ; and he wanted to make victory as complete as possible ; he therefore sent for these reserves. They arrived just as the Russian column from Karaul had been entirely repulsed, with the loss of 250 men,

and were dispersing in a disorderly flight, pursued by a sufficient body of horse to prevent them from rallying. The Turkish ranks were now re-formed; and, with new vigour, and augmented numbers, they returned to the assault of the intrenchment, out of which the Russians had never been able successfully to sally. This last effort was triumphant. The Turks burst through the defences, and routed the disheartened troops behind them. About 2400 Russians were slain in the village, among the gardens, and in the field-works. A proportionate number were wounded, and, amongst these, two generals, who are stated to have been Aurep and Tuinont. We believe that the Turks took not a dozen prisoners—so ferocious was the engagement. They, on their side, had 200 men killed, and 700 wounded. They captured four guns, and all the ammunition and stores in the intrenchments; besides, of course, obtaining the arms of the slain. The village of Citate remained in their hands; and on the next day, and the next again, they held it by force against the vehement efforts of the enemy to retake it. They ranged about the neighbourhood as masters for a few days longer, and, by several brilliant raids and forays, drove the Russians all the way back to Krajova. This division of the invading army now established its head-quarters at Slatina—a more distant and more modest situation than they had recently intended to select; and Europe thenceforward heard no more of the great deed appointed for the 13th of January—viz., the storming of Kalafat. All the Russian combinations were, in fact, arrested and dislocated by this prompt, this brilliant, rush of the Turks upon Citate—a dictate of genius. They saved their post, in the only way in which it could have been saved—by assailing that of the enemy. Such was the remarkable combat of Citate—an action which proves that the Turks know how to attack and to storm intrenchments, as well as how to defend them. We have been the more minute in our account of this event, because some people, at the time, called it “a waste of bravery.” No deep insight into the mysteries of strategy is needed to perceive that this exploit, on the contrary, displayed the greatest prudence, that it economised the Turkish means and chances, dispersed and disordered the plans of the invader, and tended powerfully to render his final discomfiture more practicable and

more certain. After a short time, still guided by the same steady and circumspect moderation, the Turks retired to their intrenchments at Kalafat, where they had by this time mounted 250 heavy guns. There, and at Widdin, immediately behind it, on the other side of the Danube, they had increased their force to 25,000 men.

On the day before the battle of Citate (the 5th), Omer Pasha had again alarmed the Russians at Giurgevo, where there was a sharp skirmish, in which the Turks had rather the advantage. They then recrossed the river. Omer was teaching them to forget 1829—to know their own prowess, and to place a due confidence in him, and in themselves.

Still, it is not to be denied that the Russians were very far indeed from having any reason to dread being expelled from the principalities by Omer Pasha. He skilfully led forces who gallantly served him. But that is all. His means were inadequate to recover Vallachia; and barely able, if ably used, to protect the empire. He could not really assume the offensive; and he scarcely succeeded, by the exercise of very great ability, in pretending to assume it. The Russians were incessantly reinforced. Their siege trains had begun to arrive, and they had parked a hundred and twenty large guns at Galatz, opposite the Bessarabian frontier, and a hundred at Giurgevo.

In the Crimea, the czar, prescient of coming dangers, had ordered the erection of coast batteries, which were now rising in every favourable spot upon the cliffs. At such a time, and after such occurrences, the order reached our fleet to *salute* the Russian ships. There was a better use, than that, for our guns. At Constantinople, news arrived that Kars was taken, and that, on the other hand, all Abasia had pronounced for Shamyl, and that a great attack upon Shefketil had been repulsed. The allied squadrons patrolled the Euxine; there was no danger of another Sinope; and Turkish reinforcements, therefore, were despatched by sea to Armenia. In the following March, the sultan, it was announced, would join the army of Bulgaria; and great and truly Asiatic preparations resounded in Adrianople to entertain him when he should pass. A palace was newly equipped in that ancient city, where eight hundred domestics and five hundred horses belonging to Abdul-Medjid had already arrived. Less de-



pressing intelligence was brought from Asia; the Turks were again the assailants, and were operating at Akhalzik, and against Gumri.

On the 19th of January, lieutenant-general Schilders, who, in 1829, had taken Silistria, and who was at the head of the engineering department in the Russian army, left Warsaw, in pursuance of a command of the emperor Nicholas, and, on the 26th, reached Krajova, to assume the supreme direction of the siege operations of the ensuing campaign. Omer Pasha had then been ill for three weeks—in fact, since the date of the last combat at Giurgevo—and he was reported to be dying. About the 14th of the month the news reached the sultan, and on the 20th, or the 21st, two of his own household physicians were in attendance upon the able warrior who had retrieved the fortunes and restored the fame of the Osmanlis. This was at Shumla, whither he had retired. In ten days more he was again well, and he resumed his duties. General (now marshal) Baraguay d'Hilliers, the French ambassador, a good diplomatist, but a better soldier—the last surviving pupil of Napoleon—made, about this time, that tour of inspection for which he was so well qualified; and we will note, in passing, that, at the same date, the Russo-Greek conspiracy broke out. Europe was alarmed more by what could not then be known than by what was ascertained; and when Arta was seized, some people supposed that the Ottoman empire, filled with explosive materials, was now at its end, and that it would be at once burnt out in a huge civil conflagration. The limits of the insurrection, however, were soon as well known as its nature and its origin.

General Schilders made his first report before the end of January—it was not the loose and cursory conjecture of a hostile witness, but the official return of an experienced Russian general to his sovereign, respecting the losses of a Russian army. We cannot read it without a shudder. He states that in January, 1854, *thirty-five thousand Russian soldiers* had already perished in the principalities. This is not only a Russian statement, we repeat, but the statement of one of the ablest and most distinguished generals in the service of the czar. And yet, at that date, there had been only two months, or, at most, ten weeks of actual fighting;

nor was it, in truth, chiefly by the sword that this stupendous loss had been inflicted. Fatigue, hunger, want, cold, the marsh fever, and the cholera, had swept away five-sixths of these wretched victims to the military ambition of one bad man.

For about a month, dating from the battle of Citate, both armies on the Danube were occupied chiefly in preparations for fighting; and it is fortunate that the illness of Omer Pasha—which lasted three weeks—occurred after such exploits as secured his troops for a while from the chance of any serious molestation. But further, he had made already his principal arrangements; and his part now was to wait. During this lull in the war, Count Orlof was endeavouring, at Vienna and Berlin, to detach the two great German courts from England and France, and to induce them to espouse the cause of the emperor Nicholas. Of the minor German courts the czar was sure; but on Denmark and Sweden he was very anxious to make an immediate impression. These two states, backed by his own maritime power, might have offered, in the ensuing spring, a formidable barrier to a hostile expedition. The czar, however, could not prevail on the two Scandinavian monarchies to adopt any other policy than that of strict neutrality.

The reader perceives how vast were the necessary dimensions of a war with Russia. Our brave countrymen would have to fight, at the moment, in scenes which were thousands of miles asunder, yet everywhere against the same enemy. Comrades, well known to each other, were to help in a common work, while one part of them were in the frozen north, and the other amid the pestilential heats of Bulgaria, and off the rose-fields and vineyards of the Crimean coast, with all the continent between. Nor was the large battle-space which Europe afforded sufficient for such a conflict. It was to rage in Asia, and to threaten with its presence even a part of North America.

It was on the 8th of February that, at length, Baron Brunow, the Russian ambassador, took his departure from London. M. Kisselef, at the same moment, quitted Paris. Thus England and France, confederates for the first time since the days of Cromwell in a great military struggle, were left face to face with the most important war which had

occurred for many centuries, and, beyond comparison, the most awful (in the means of destruction) ever known since the foundation of the world. Still the allies were unwilling to make the rupture irrevocable. They framed a statement of the terms on which they could yet treat with Russia, and, having obtained the assent of Austria to the principles of their proposal, sent it to St. Petersburg. They then redoubled their preparations for the conflict. The Baltic fleet was fitted out, and Sir Charles Napier selected for its command. The French contributed their contingent to this fleet; but, while in the Black Sea they maintained a magnificent naval force, and even a greater number of first-class ships than we ourselves, their proportion of the Baltic fleet was considerably smaller. Therefore, admiral Parseval Deschênes here gave precedence to admiral Napier, just as Lord Raglan, in the united army of the East, yielded the highest post to the marshal St. Arnaud, who brought a larger force into the field. It was agreed that the expedition of the Western Powers to Turkey should, in the first instance, consist of about seventy-five thousand men, of whom the French should furnish about fifty or forty-five thousand, and the English rather more than half that number. But the emperor Napoleon announced that, in case of necessity, he could spare, and would send, a hundred thousand; that he would maintain, in addition, a great army in camp and ready for the march on the northern frontier of France; and that this host he would, if compelled, lead in person to a part of Europe where no operations were originally contemplated, and where, he hoped, there would be no occasion to renew the memorable inflictions of 1806 and 1807.

Early in February, our own military arrangements were far advanced. The militia had, in great part, been actually levied, and were fast acquiring that discipline which alone they wanted, to render them a perfectly sufficient defence of the country in the absence of our soldiers. On the 22nd of the month, the first British detachment destined for the East, the Coldstream and Grenadier Guards, left London by railway, for Southampton, and there embarked amidst the acclamations of an immense multitude, who had flocked from neighbouring, and even from distant counties, to bid good speed to their defenders. After this date regiment followed

regiment in quick succession. The cavalry went last; and the horses were so long delayed, that loud complaints arose on the part of the public, who were rebuked for their impatience, and told that they could not understand the great difficulties attending the enterprise. A part of the provisions, and especially one shipment of provender, were in a state which proved that men lived who could be content to swindle a few pounds by means which would inevitably diminish the efficiency of a national expedition, and tend infinitely to waste the lives of our soldiers. All this time the French were also in full activity. Great forces of cavalry and infantry and field-guns were directed towards the south; and passing through Lyons and Grenoble, reached the seaports of the Mediterranean. There a sufficient fleet was fast assembling for their transport; and they were rapidly embarked at Marseilles and Toulon. The heavier artillery required for siege operations was not so soon prepared. With us, too, this was the last munition furnished.

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## CHAPTER LXXIV.

RENEWED EFFORTS IN THE PRINCIPALITIES—FINAL REJECTION OF THE TERMS PROPOSED BY ENGLAND AND FRANCE—RUPTURE BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE—RUSSIAN FINANCE—BOMBARDMENT OF ODESSA—OPERATIONS IN THE DOBRUDSHA.

THE news that the Russian envoys had quitted London and Paris reached Constantinople in about twelve days (that is, on the 20th of February, 1854), and excited the wildest joy. The delight of the Osmanlis overcame their habitual gravity. The ancient capital of the East broke into a frenzy of exultation. Intelligence of the great event was despatched to the army of the Danube; but before the messengers arrived, that army already knew it from the wild Syrian recruits and the Bashi-bozouks of Asia, who had outstripped the government couriers. Hostilities had been actively resumed. After their late repulses and humiliations at Matchin, at Giurgevo, and at Citate, the Russians, as though retreat were their next business, began to fortify Fokshani, a place far to the rear,



seated at the foot of the Carpathians, and about half-way between Bukharest, the chief town of Vallachia, and Yassy, the distant capital of Moldavia. In Fokshani they laid up large military stores; and then, finding that there was no advance of the Turks, and that their own reinforcements were constantly, if slowly, arriving, they resumed the offensive.

About the 13th of February they collected in considerable strength against Giurgevo, and attacked it with much loss indeed, but so far with success, that the Turks, after two or three days' resistance, evacuated the place in perfect order, and took boat to Rustchuk. This was on the 19th of February. The enemy immediately seized the town. Guns were then directed against Rustchuk. Day and night the Russians sought, by force and by guile, to cross at that point. The resistance was desperate. Nevertheless, by the increasing weight of the pressure, Omer Pasha felt that the enemy in some place must attain the right bank of the Danube. The melancholy certainty justified his original plan and dispositions. He took an extraordinary resolution, however, which was in some respects a change (unless it was a corollary) of that plan. He determined not to recal his outlying and far-extended left wing; but in case of any intermediate advance and irruption of the enemy, to leave it to act like an independent army, and to give it a roving commission—predatory, adventurous, dangerous—on the right flank of the whole Russian occupation. It should have its base upon Servia, and in case of mishap, its retreat upon Bosnia. Semendria on the north, Usitza on the south, Zvornok straight behind, in the west, should be to its rear what Shumla was to have been. Shumla, he hoped, would take care of itself, and he of Shumla. Perhaps the noble combat of Citate inclined his doubtful thoughts to this decision. The consequences of that victory were long felt; and on the 24th of February the Russians were still on their defence, and rather timidly commanded in front of Kalafat—a town which, according to their own plans, ought to have been stormed on the 13th of the previous month.

March opened with a change. The Russians had completed their dilatory preparations; and they now had, for attack, all the means which they were likely to have. Still, on the very eve of their grand and irresistible advance into

Bulgaria, Vallachia was the scene of another warning blow. The Turkish column at Rahova crossed the Danube on the 4th of March, and drove back the Russian outposts of Kalarasch with perfect success, and no small slaughter. Then, while the whole force of the enemy was assembling to punish this inroad, the Turks returned in safety to Rahova. On the 5th of March martial law was proclaimed through all the Russias and in Poland; and orders came to the Russian generals in the principalities to press the war more vigorously. On the 11th of the same month there was a violent struggle around Kalafat; but the Turks remained masters of the place. It was their last stronghold on the northern bank of the Danube. But they continued to keep the south bank, as well as some islands in the stream. That island, especially, opposite Turtukai (the Turkish batteries on which helped to gain the battle of Oltenitza), will be remembered by the reader. Prince Gortchakof attacked it on the 15th of March, and would have gained it very dearly at the cost of 2000 men; for that island, as we have shown, was as much commanded from the south shore as it commanded the north. But Gortchakof lost 2000 men in this attack, and, at the same time, failed to take the island. It would have been a victory of very uncertain value; but it was a bloody defeat instead. About this time, between the 12th and 16th, two frigates, one English and one French, were despatched from Beicos Bay, to open by force the Sulineh Mouth (which is the middle mouth) of the Danube. It may seem to posterity wonderful that Beicos should still have been the station from which to summon even *any* of the allied vessels. But many untoward circumstances—some natural, and others, perhaps, conventional and deceptive—the delays of diplomacy, and the dreadful storms which had so long swept the Black Sea—combined to render it as advisable in appearance, as it was fortunate in results, that the fleet should return frequently to their old moorings.

On the 11th of March our Baltic fleet sailed from Spithead in the presence of the queen, who led it out to sea in her yacht the *Fairy*. On the 12th, the emperor Nicholas contemptuously rejected the terms proposed by the Western Powers. He said, "that those terms required not five minutes' consideration," and announced to his own ministers

and great officers that, before he submitted to such conditions, he would sacrifice his last soldier, and spend his last ruble. While this haughty decision—the general purport of which the electric wires sent flashing at once through all Europe—was borne to London and Paris by the overland couriers, the French and English troops began, though very gradually, to muster in force at Gallipoli. It was a considerable time before they had assembled on the little peninsula to the west of the Dardanelles about 14,000 French and about 7000 English troops. The French had a shorter voyage to make; but then they had more soldiers, more materials of war, and more provisions to transport. They arrived the first; and they disembarked and encamped with greater ease, promptitude, and order, than our soldiers. They had, moreover, come so much better furnished, that, in several instances, after their own debarkation, they helped and greatly expedited, with the boats of their men-of-war, the landing of a much smaller body of English troops.

About the time of these operations of the allies in widely separated scenes, the sympathies manifested towards Russia by a large part of the population in the kingdom of Greece, began to excite uneasiness and indignation. Indeed, it was found necessary, not very long afterwards, to drop, while on their way to a worthier scene of action, a portion of the French contingent; and some six thousand of these troops landed accordingly near Athens, in order to bring a petty but troublesome kingdom to its senses. They landed the greater part of that number at the Piræus on the 15th of May. We mention this to save or abridge future digression from the more important events which will occupy the reader's notice. It was on the 27th of March that the formal rupture between Turkey and Greece occurred, the Greek envoy, general Metaxas, receiving on that day his passports at Constantinople. The sultan had sent whatever troops he could spare to the frontier of Thessaly, under Achmet Pasha, to oppose the inroads of the Greeks, who were endeavouring to organise a general insurrection of their co-religionists all over the Turkish empire; the *foreign* Greeks thus abetting against the divan its Greek *subjects*, to the profit of Russia, and no doubt suborned by Russian gold, and urged on by Russian instigations. On the 1st of April, the Turkish troops near

Janina, in Albania, obtained a small advantage over these marauding enemies, who, according to the laws of war and of nations, were little better than freebooters. A step taken by our ambassador, about the time when the intelligence of this victory reached Constantinople, combined with that intelligence to elate the spirits of the divan. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe issued a circular to all our consuls on the 6th of April, denouncing the Greek insurrection, and calling on them to disown its abettors wherever they were found. The immense expenses to which Turkey was subjected by all these emergencies had induced the sultan to adopt a very violent, and we believe, in Moslem countries, an unprecedented expedient, which equalled in audacity, though not in bloodiness, his predecessor Mahmoud's massacre of the Janisaries. The Sheikhu'l Islam, or high pontiff of the Mussulmans, was deposed, and all the revenues of the mosques were appropriated to the state. It was—to compare Christians with Pagans—not merely like a suppression of monasteries and a seizure of all their effects, but it was a confiscation of ecclesiastical property in general throughout the empire. This also affected, be it observed, an immense amount of lay property, assigned, for the sake of stability, in turbulent but fanatical lands, to the ecclesiastical protection of titular owners, sacred in the eyes of state and people. It was not, therefore, a time for the Porte to make needless domestic enemies. But, transported by the rapture of his high struggle, and encouraged by Lord Stratford's recent circular, the sultan struck on both sides, and with both hands. He decreed that all Greeks, within a brief delay named, should quit Constantinople, under liability of the seizure and escheat to the crown of their possessions, with the penalty of personal arrest added. But here the veteran soldier, general Baraguay d'Ililliers, ambassador of France, interposed. He besought the grand seigneur to make a distinction. There were disaffected Greeks, and there were faithful Greeks. The tie between the disaffected Greeks and Russia was exclusively a religious tie; it never had been *national*, and it never could, in any one respect, be so regarded. Now, the religious tie was impossible between the Latinist or Roman Catholic Greeks and Russia, the religion of which was known to be disavowed and detested by such Greeks. Their loyalty



to the sultan was, besides, both proverbial of old, and manifest now. If these were expelled from their homes and occupations, and in so indiscriminating, unmerited, and arbitrary a manner confounded—innocent with the guilty, patriotic with the traitors—and thus driven suddenly from Constantinople, he must reluctantly take his own departure also from that city. No more was required; and the sultan observed the distinction which had been thus laid before his attention.

We have seen that, as our soldiers went to the East, so our fleet went to the Baltic, before either this country or France had yet formally declared war. The marvellous stand made by Omer Pasha upon the Danube was not, and could not be, foreseen. This will account for the choice at first of Gallipoli as a great landing-point. It was the shortest way to interpose at Adrianople between the capital and the Russians, should these force Mount Hæmus, and burst into Rumelia. Powerful works were even constructed from the Gulf of Saro to the Sea of Marmora, to render, in case of necessity, the isthmus of Gallipoli a safe retreat behind a new Torres Vedras of the East; and this was the first serious occupation which the English and French soldiers undertook in companionship. But affairs changed in their aspect; and many of the regiments were sent up to Scutari; and some even beyond this, to Buyukdéré, on the European shore, above Constantinople. After it was known that war had been actually declared by France and England, the troops were gradually collected in still more advanced positions—at Bourgas, and then at Varna. When the insolent remark upon the last offers made to Russia (rather than answer to them) was known in Paris and London, all the forbearance of the Western Powers was fairly exhausted; and, on the 28th of March, war was officially proclaimed. Russia followed up the rejection of our conditions by some untenable proposals of her own, based on the same wild claims with which she had started originally. These last proposals were pronounced, on the 7th of the ensuing month, quite inadmissible by England and France.

We think it must be evident to all readers, from the complicated and wide-spread transactions of arms and negotiation which we have now related, that Russia was, from the

very outset, bent upon war—bent upon some desperate effort to achieve a new and predominant position in the comity of nations. She had been, in truth, for a considerable time husbanding her resources and preparing her means for some unusual exertion. In 1853, she had freed herself from the annual interest of certain old loans by paying up the principal. She then withdrew the sums placed in the public stock of France and England; issued treasury bills to meet the current expenses, and prohibited the export of the precious metals from her own territory. Still, her financial situation in a general war, such as that which she has so wantonly provoked, can never be sound. The ordinary revenue of Russia would perhaps be 32,000,000*l.*; but, allowing for the inevitable abatement caused by war in the proceeds of the customs and excise, it can scarcely amount to 24,000,000*l.* at present; while the expenditure is enormously and concurrently increased. No doubt the sums obtained just after the Hungarian war, under the plea of finishing the Moscow railway, were not yet exhausted when this vast conflict commenced. But the stress of it is evident, from the financial expedients to which the czar presently resorted. He appropriated at once five millions sterling of the bullion which forms the basis of the paper money; and, at the same time, he issued four millions sterling of treasury bills. He also invited loans and *accepted gifts* (praising the patriotism of the latter) from various public funds, from the clergy, and from the charitable trusts of the empire; and when the “Dutch loan” failed, he levied a forced loan, amounting to eight millions sterling, from his own subjects indiscriminately, and called it a voluntary contribution. By these means he realised, in a year and a half, nearly thirty millions sterling. But all the resources on which he drew feel the pressure of the war, which renders much of the agricultural produce unsaleable, while it impoverishes the noble or landowning class by the inordinate and unpaid drain of the most valuable part of their live stock, the poor serfs—swept off in conscriptions. Before the war, the metallic reserve of the Russian government was worth twenty-one millions sterling; but the notes in circulation amounted to 50,000,000*l.*; and while the bullion has since incessantly diminished, the issues of paper have incessantly augmented.

If we add to these grave facts three others—1st, that there is an immense land and banking company guaranteed by the state, which company (it is called “the Lombards”) holds five millions of the serfs in pawn; 2ndly, that the deposits of money lent by all classes to government, *and resumable on demand*, were, on the 1st of January, 1853, according to the official return of the Russian minister of finance, not under 128,960,000*l.*; and 3rdly, that the funded debt of Russia amounts to 60,000,000*l.* more, we shall be able to form some idea of the solidity of Russia’s financial condition under the weight of a vast struggle like the present. The financial data which we have used in this sketch will be found in M. Léon Faucher’s calculations of the monetary resources on which the Russian state can depend.

Very different was the financial situation of the two maritime powers. England required neither a loan nor any very crushing addition to the weight of her taxes; and the loan of the French emperor was brilliantly successful; nor was the French government forced to resort to oppressive taxation to meet the interest which the new stock, thus created, was to bear. Many old imposts, on the contrary, from which the country has been lately relieved by the imperial government, in its cautious and gradual approaches towards the principle of free-trade, will probably never be revived. In England, the continuance and duplication of the income-tax, and certain new dues on foreign bills of exchange drawn abroad, constituted the chief fiscal peculiarities of the first war budget.

With this brief but necessary glance at the general condition of the respective belligerents, we may continue our record of the actual events. And here we are obliged to say that, having landed the English and French expeditionary forces in Turkey, and, as it were, set them down within reach of the enemy, we shall find little to justify any minute journal of their proceedings for the next few months. The war proceeded; and, indeed, one very remarkable part of the struggle—a truly memorable transaction—soon engaged the attention of all Europe; but we miss, in the story of it, the action or presence of the allied forces. They were near, and took no part. In short, though despatched in spring, they were not destined to engage the foe till autumn.

During that long delay, sufferings formed a greater part of their history than actions, and these sufferings were of the saddest kind in the soldiers' estimation—the visitation of a dreadful pestilence, not the hardships or catastrophes of a glorious campaign. With the exception of one vigorous blow struck by the fleet, our remarks apply to the general attitude of both services. On the other side of Europe, however, something was to be achieved (though even there not much), and the reader will perceive that many of the adventures of the Baltic expeditionary force were contemporaneous with the occurrences which we now proceed to mention in their order.

Trustworthy information having arrived that between Sebastopol and the various Russian stations, from Anapa to Odessa, there was a constant and active passage to and fro of troops and stores, the allied fleets issued forth and patrolled the whole Euxine, forcing the Russian ships to take refuge in Sebastopol; after which, admiral Dundas and admiral Hamelin, with their squadrons, approached Odessa on the 22nd of March. There, the squadrons shortening sail about three miles out to sea, sent a small vessel with a flag of truce, to summon general Osten-Sacken to deliver up to them all the ships, &c., in the harbour, failing which, chastisement should forthwith be inflicted for the massacre of Sinope.

Before anything was attempted against Odessa, some shots from the batteries had been aimed at an English flag of truce (borne by the *Fury*); and it was indispensable to teach our barbarous enemies, by a severe lesson, to respect the laws of nations. Next day, the 23rd, twelve war steamers of both nations were detached from the fleet, and sent within range of shot; the order being to spare the town, if possible, but to destroy the batteries, the magazines, and the vessels in the harbour. The order was scrupulously obeyed in the first particular, and executed with brilliant effect in the second. The detachment of steamers approached, accompanied by rocket-boats; these ventured further in, being a smaller mark for the land artillery, which dared not, besides, waste its fire *short* of the covering frigates and steamers. The boats having taken their station, the attacking detachment began a most singular and beautiful movement in file, tracking one the other's wake with exquisite precision, along an ever-repeated circle;



and as each vessel touched those points of her orbit which were nearest the Russian batteries, she delivered her broadside, passed onwards, and made way for her successors in the revolving chain, until her own turn should come again. In the midst of the action, one of the French steamers, struck by a red-hot shot through the hull, caught fire, and returned for a brief space to the fleet, to have assistance in extinguishing the flames, which was very soon effected.

The defence from the shore was at first very spirited, and the Russians are described as having stood well to their guns; but in range these were inferior to the artillery of the ships—and, by sensible degrees, the fire of the garrison became slower. At length, two great powder magazines of the Russians blew up in quick succession, while most of the batteries were dismounted, the forts knocked to pieces, and the ruins strewn with the bodies of the artillerymen. When the defences were shattered into a shapeless ruin, and the resistance of the Russians had evidently ceased in despair, and when thirteen of their ships, laden with munitions of war, had been captured, the allied detachment drew slowly off, and rejoined the fleets. Their comrades who had, from the yards of the distant men-of-war, witnessed the action, descended now and welcomed them, with shouts that might have been heard on shore. What the Russian loss was in slain and wounded, we have not, of course, the means of ascertaining with exactitude. The officers engaged have estimated the number of the enemy killed at about eight hundred or a thousand soldiers. The allies had ten sailors wounded, and five killed. Such was the bombardment of Odessa on the 23rd of March.

Shortly afterwards the loss of the *Tiger* (16 guns) occurred. She grounded at the Campagna Costazzi, near Odessa, in such a position that she could not use her batteries against the field artillery on shore. After a short fight she surrendered, and her crew (250) were all made prisoners, and carried to Odessa, where they were well treated. The captain's (Giffard's) wounds proved mortal; and he told the officers and sailors around with his last breath, that to his death they owed their own lives; for he was going to fire the powder magazine when he was struck down. The Russians blew up the *Tiger*.

It was about this epoch that Prince Dolgoruki, sent to Teheran to involve Persia in the czar's quarrel, struck the Sedr Azim, or prime minister of the shah, with a cane, to punish his reluctance. The most imperative instructions had now come from St. Petersburg to the Russian generals in the principalities, to effect some great exploit *at whatever cost*. The frightful significance of this order delivered Prince Gortchakof and his coadjutors from certain natural scruples and hesitations. Long since, the czar must have perused the report of general Schilders, announcing, so early as the month of January, a loss of thirty-five thousand Russian soldiers, although active hostilities had then lasted only about ten weeks. There could be no illusion in the imperial mind, and yet this order is sent to the generals, enforced by the awful addition, "*at whatever cost*." To hear was to obey.

We have seen how, on the 15th of March, Prince Gortchakof had been frustrated in a bloody attempt to seize the island between Oltenitza and Turtukai, losing 2000 men, and yet failing to storm the place. Lüders had five days before this crossed the Danube at Galatz. He was in force, having  $24\frac{1}{4}$  battalions, 8 squadrons, 6 sotnias, and 64 guns. Gortchakof, learning the fact of the passage so far down the river to the rear of his own left, determined to abandon for the present his disheartening operations against Turtukai and Rustchuk, and to fly to the support of Lüders; thus imparting, he hoped, a decisive character to the advance of that enterprising general. By a retrograde circuit, he passed even beyond the rear of Lüders' left flank, and threw himself across the river a little above Tultcha, with 14 battalions, 16 squadrons, 6 sotnias, and 44 guns. He brought with him more cavalry than Lüders, though a smaller general force; and their united columns amounted to nearly 50,000 men. The reader is aware that Omer Pasha had decided not to dispute possession of the Upper Dobrudsha; and it is, therefore, nearly incomprehensible, though stated in all the contemporary accounts of these operations, that Prince Gortchakof should have there taken eleven guns and 150 prisoners. His capture of the guns is more unintelligible than his capture of the prisoners, who might have been the unarmed or half-armed ordinary inhabitants—for the guns must have belonged to Tultcha, which the Turks still held as an outpost, and which

was the only place they retained in all that region. This event took place about the 23rd of March, the day of the bombardment of Odessa, and five days before the emperor Napoleon—who, on the 2nd, had, in person, opened at Paris the legislative session of 1854—joined queen Victoria in a common declaration, purporting that the rupture between them and Russia, and that their alliance with Turkey for the purpose of active and direct operations of war, were now *accepted facts*. Redschid Pasha, general Baraguay d'Hilliers, and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, soon afterwards signed the tripartite treaty to this effect at Constantinople; and, still later, it was solemnly ratified at Paris.

The perilous success of the Russian divisions, who had now burst into the northern Dobrudsha, was soon counterbalanced by a misfortune, the news of which reached the ill-starred commanders in the midst of their exultation. Fokshani, where they had piled up the richest part of their laboriously-accumulated munitions of war and general stores, was burnt. The loss to a struggling military treasury must have been extremely serious; though we cannot specify its amount.

The divisions which had crossed the Danube continued their advance, taking Babadagh on the sea, and Hirsova on the river. All the Upper Dobrudsha, except Tultcha, was now occupied by the invaders; and by April the 3rd their Cossacks patrolled as far as Kustendjeh, which the Turks kept, and which was their grasp upon the sea, at the east of Trajan's Wall. On the north shore of the Danube, the Turks retained nothing except Kalafat, two hundred miles to the west.

It was on the 16th that admiral Plumridge sent home the first Russian prizes, five vessels of commerce; and on the 17th four more such vessels followed. They were laden chiefly with salt. The first division of our Baltic fleet—consisting wholly of steamers, 17 in number, carrying nearly 10,000 men and 1017 guns—was speedily followed by the second; this last brought 25 ships of war, of which twelve were line-of-battle. The united divisions constituted a noble fleet of 42 vessels, 2200 guns, 16,000-horse power, and 22,000 sailors and marines. The only additions desirable to this splendid armament were a military force (which arrived too

late for any but a partial and disproportionate exploit), and a sufficient flotilla of steam gun-boats drawing but little water, which were equipped too late altogether to be of service during the year 1854.

We return to the war on the Danube. The Russians, having seized Hirsova, spent some time in preparing for a great attempt to pass Trajan's Wall; but, though their Cossacks scoured the country down to the very ramparts of Kustendjeh, they found that they had selected a most difficult part of the Turkish line to force; and at Czernavoda, on the 25th of April, more than five weeks after general Lüders crossed the Danube at Galatz, and nearly a month after the second Russian column had followed near Tultcha to his support, their united divisions were taught a severe lesson. The Turks at that place—which is some five miles to the south of Trajan's Wall—once more checked the Russian advance; and, in a sharp action, repulsed the enemy with considerable loss. On the whole, the avenues by which the Russians endeavoured to penetrate from the Dobrudsha were defended for about seven weeks; during which time the invaders—being locked up amid the marshes of the worst district of the whole Turkish territory in Europe—suffered incomparably more from ague, fever, cholera, and privations, than they suffered in the field.

It must not be supposed that this advance along the coast against Omer Pasha's right wing was an isolated movement. On the contrary, it was part of a very large combination which marshal Paskievitch, prince of Erivan, was, on the 8th of April, summoned from Poland to superintend in person, and in which the famous general of engineers, Schilders, was to take an eminent part. Marshal Paskievitch had long since expressed an opinion that Prince Gortchakof was conducting the campaign injudiciously; and, just about the time of which we speak, there was an immense change in all the Russian dispositions. Their right was drawn back; their left, as we have related, occupied the Dobrudsha, and was thundering vehemently, at the north-east gates, so to say, of Bulgaria; while now, the various columns which had been countermarched from beyond the Aluta, were massed in apparently irresistible strength all around Bukharest and Slobodie, and in front of those towns, bearing fast upon the



Danube, between Oltenitza and Czernavoda. With general Lüders' army these concentrated troops maintained their communications through Hirsova; and his instructions were to press forward at whatever cost, and to interpose between Varna and Silistria. It was evident that the recent peremptory and dreadful orders from St. Petersburg were impelling the Russians to their last and truly desperate exertions.

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## CHAPTER LXXV.

### HISTORICAL ENIGMA—SIEGE OF SILISTRIA—DISCOMFITURE OF THE RUSSIANS—EVACUATION OF THE PRINCIPALITIES.

WE approach the siege of Silistria. In the history of that great operation there is one mysterious and sombre particular, which the reader will notice. The subject is more than delicate; and we will not, in our present uncertainty, say anything beyond what the duties of a historic narrative imperiously require. How is it that from the 1st of May to the 15th of June the besiegers were allowed to press forward their scientific approaches, and their sanguinary assaults, *unmolested by any serious or regular attack from without?* A very great Anglo-French force was by this time mustered at Varna; and, allowing for all the windings of the road, not more than seventy miles interposed between that maritime station and the very walls of Silistria, while a much shorter march would have precipitated the irresistible soldiers of the West upon that army of many sufferings which beleaguered the gallant fortress. But several replies may be given, even if unsatisfactory ones, on behalf of our own and the French troops. We accordingly repeat the question, with more direct reference to the Turkish host which Omer Pasha held at Shumla. He had, at the least, 70,000 men accumulated around that impregnable position, or within easy summons; and his march for the relief of Silistria would have been still shorter than that of the allies. It was the general opinion in Europe, it was the impression among our officers in Bulgaria, and, we have reason and warranty for adding, that it was, for about three weeks, Omer Pasha's own conviction

that Silistria, unassisted, must fall; and when we say "unassisted," we mean without some strong and combined effort to assist it. It was, also, not for a moment denied, that the beleaguering army would have to abandon their enterprise if that effort were made, and they were thus attacked. It was, in the end, found that, although not externally assailed in the manner we have described, they were yet obliged to raise the siege; can there, then, be any doubt what the result would have been, if a powerful force had disturbed their operations?

We speak not of any wild advance, or attempt to advance, up the Dobrudsha; nor do we refer in any manner to a general effort to carry the war across the Danube; what we say is specific; it relates to one, and only to one, manifestly practicable movement, which, it is acknowledged, would, if made, have delivered the most important river-fortress in Turkey; and without which, it was supposed, that fortress must surrender: and this movement *was not made*. We wish the reader to fix the true case in his mind; it is well worthy of his attention. This, then, it is: The general expectation was that Silistria would fall if the forces in Bulgaria did not move—Omer Pasha, like the rest, entertaining that expectation; on the other hand, it was the unanimous conviction of all concerned, that, by a move of the troops in Bulgaria, Silistria could most certainly be saved. And with this expectation on the one hand, and this conviction on the other, the troops in Bulgaria remained quiescent during the whole time of the danger. The very style in which the progress of the siege was adverted to by the journals of Europe is most remarkable—*e. g.*, "Silistria had not fallen at the departure of the last advices."—"It is rumoured that the besieged made a great sally on the —, and destroyed the Russian works opposite the west front, slaying a thousand men."—"The marvellous resistance of Silistria still continued at the date of our despatch; though, of course, a garrison of eight thousand men cannot be expected to withstand for ever an army of 60,000."—"Silistria still holds out."—"It is rumoured that Omer Pasha, on the —, was advancing, at the head of 70,000 men, from Shumla, to the relief of Silistria. The rumour wants confirmation. The allied troops were still busy encamping round Varna."—"The telegraphic

report about the advance of Omer Pasha, at the head of 70,000 men, turns out to be a *canard* of the Viennese Stock Exchange. It is doubted whether Omer Pasha could bring quite that number into the field at present. He remains quietly intrenched at Shumla, where he is supposed to have only about 55,000 troops of all arms. The besieging force scattered around Silistria in the necessarily dispersed array of an investing army, numbers now at least 60,000 men, who are very much harassed by the repeated and desperate sallies of the garrison."—"The reported surrender of Silistria is not true. The place still keeps the Turkish ensign flying, though the valiant garrison is nearly exhausted. It is a pity something could not be done to succour them. Theirs is a waste of heroism." A curious story is told about an interview, under flags of truce, demanded by the Russians. The Muscovite commander wished to spare, he said, the needless effusion of blood, by merely informing Mussa Pasha of a fact, viz., the czar had sent *conclusive* directions that Silistria "*must be taken*;" therefore, it might as well be given up at once; to which Mussa, stroking his beard, replied that he also had a fact to communicate, viz., "that Abdul-Medjid Khan had honoured him, Mussa, originally (and he was not aware that the mind of his sacred highness had changed) with conclusive instructions to defend the place, nor would he surrender it if he had but a thousand men, and all Russia was at its gates, with the czar in person." Thereupon, a sort of masonic sign is said to have been made by the hand of the Russian commander, which sign implied an enormous sum in gold "*imperials*." Mussa's only answer was: "Let us now separate—the interview under white flags is over."

All this, in substance, was true; and our allusion to the incidents here will save us the necessity of recurring to them hereafter. Let us quote a few words more from the electric messages of the time. They are at present both interesting and elucidatory. "The wonderful garrison of Silistria is said to be now reduced nearly one-half. On the — they made another amazing sally, and routed the Russians at the south front. This cannot last much longer. The next mail will probably record the surrender of the fortress. The terms will be mild, it is thought; the garrison,

at least, are certain to have the honours of war." (They were, indeed. Of those honours the heroes made sure.) "On the 24th, the *maréchal de St. Arnaud*, Lord Raglan, and Omer Pasha reviewed together the Turkish army at Shumla." (This was true.) "The troops were found to be in splendid condition." (True—an exact and just description.) "Next day, the 25th, the Russians succeeded at length in *interposing between Varna and Silistria*." (True again—both the facts and the dates.) "The fortress must now hoist the white flag; the continuous bombardment is terrific; a combined assault by storming columns *thirty thousand strong* is to take place immediately. Of course, it will prove successful. The brave defenders are worn to skeletons. Nothing can exceed the efficiency of both the Anglo-French and the Turkish troops now lying respectively at Varna and at Shumla. Among them they muster, perhaps, 80,000, or even 90,000. The half of such a host would soon give an account of the Russian forces who are storming Silistria. Postscript. *A most incomprehensible rumour prevails that the grand assault has failed*. N.B. This must naturally be received with caution."

After this rapid retrospect, we can finish the historical reasoning to which facts drove us, and drove us reluctantly. In three short sentences the whole case can be stated. Firstly, the conviction prevalent (and, at that time, a most rational conviction) was this, that Silistria would fall unless a movement of the troops collected in Bulgaria was made for its relief; secondly, the conviction was prevalent (and it was equally just, equally rational) that if such a movement was made, it would most certainly raise the siege; thirdly, *no such movement was made*. Silistria could be saved by a given measure, which was perfectly practicable. Without that measure Silistria would be lost. That measure was avoided. Therefore, may we not fairly ask—Was it the intention, was it the wish, that Silistria should in fact be lost? We fear that, if the reply was honestly given, it would be affirmative. But what motives could exist? They could not be strategical. No; but they might be political, or, rather, they might be diplomatic. The emperor of Russia saw by this time that his calculations, based upon expected dissensions between England and France, and on the weak-



ness of "the sick man"—in short, that *all* his calculations were quite illusory. He was willing to accept the terms then offered. But his honour must be saved—he must not be degraded in the eyes of Europe, or desecrated in those of his own people. His pride must be humoured. Some great success must be achieved, and then he would proclaim that he was satisfied; and that, not from the stress of defeat, or compulsion, but under the influence of his "habitual moderation," he wanted to terminate this quarrel, and relieve the anxieties of the world. *Peace, it was thought, would immediately follow the capture of Silistria.*

If this vile deference to the vainglory and selfishness of the man who had inflicted so many injuries upon the community of nations was indulged at the cost of that community—if the feelings of the tyrant and the despoiler were honoured above the interests of his victims, above the interests, indeed, of the world at large, above the claims of the most righteous of causes, and (let us not forget it) above the blood of the faithful and valiant garrison of Silistria, doomed thus to destruction and to abandonment, we may at least console ourselves with two facts—first, the conduct of Omer Pasha; and, secondly, the conduct and the fate (combined) of the troops in Silistria. Whatever restraints may have been imposed upon Omer Pasha's movements by instructions, originating in some foreign embassy at Constantinople, endorsed or adopted by the divan, and then sent in authoritative form to Shumla, they but weakened and relaxed, they could not wholly prevent, the Turkish generalissimo's operations. A grand and decisive movement, ending in the annihilation of the whole Russian army, was, perhaps, averted; but the disgrace and the discomfiture which might have been deemed so impolitic, supervened all the same, in spite of the subtle precautions of an ignoble and ignominious diplomacy. Mussa Pasha's patient valour, and Omer's obstinate activity, defeated all these supposititious combinations of the closet—if they ever existed. Without asserting them to have existed, the page we have now to write will remain one of the most mysterious in military history.

The operations which we have already described will have shown to a discerning reader that the Russians had virtually

evacuated Lesser Vallachia, in order to collect an irresistible force for the crowning exploit of the campaign. Political and warlike considerations coalesced in pronouncing this exploit the most important of all. The withdrawal of the right wing of their army of occupation, the massing of troops between Bukharest and Slobodzie, the advance of Lüders, with the Danube on his right, and their own main advance towards that river in front (as the river flows due east before it turns northwards),—all betokened that the enemy was now making a great and last endeavour, in the most elaborate form of combination. But here we must note a curious circumstance, which soldiers will easily appreciate. Omer Pasha, in the face of this grand advance, did not recal his left wing. We have sufficiently explained his probable motives. He felt, so far as he himself was concerned, that he could deal with the Russians, and yet not bring another man to Shumla. Now, when such a large proportion of the invading force retired across the Aluta, this left wing of the Turks became at once an independent army, and, like Hal-of-the-Wynd, could “fight on its own hand.” All that Omer asked of them was to operate on the right flank of the enemy, to make as many diversions as possible, and perhaps, ultimately, to harass, or even to intercept, his retreat. We want this to be borne in mind.

General Lüders was rather more forward, and rather readier, than the comrades whose movement he was destined to protect. It was not their fault; six days before his own check at Czernavoda they had broken through the Danube, between Rassoza and Silistria. On a misty day (the 19th of April), Omer Pasha encountered this enemy. It is related that, in the midst of the action, a body of Turks, whom he had ordered to make a considerable circuit to the east, and then to assail the left flank of the Russians, appeared as if marching straight from the coast, guided by the noise of cannon, and the uproar of combat. The English were known to have recently landed at Varna; perhaps some had landed at Baltschik; perhaps, even some not much below Kustendjik. Who could these be, these columns from the east, except the English? While the doubt arose, and prevailed, a portentous sign seemed to afford the answer. A flag, not clearly distinguishable, but strikingly similar to the colours

of England, waved at the head of the advancing body. Panic seized the columns of Russia. They wavered, they broke their ranks, a considerable loss was incurred, and the field remained in possession of the Turks.

But yet, the main movement throve. So early as the 14th great batteries had been erected on the north bank of the Danube, opposite Silistria; and the town was bombarded from morning till night; and, undoubtedly, the Russians now began to show themselves in force on both banks of the Danube, near and around that fatal fortress. On the 28th of April the Russians, being completely established on the south bank, attacked the outworks of Silistria. On the same day, one hundred miles to the west, at Nicopolis, Sali Pasha had a battle with the Russians, who had neglected all the country lying to their right, because they were endeavouring to envelop Silistria in every direction, and they thought they had excluded the western or left wing of the Turkish army from the real business then in hand. Sali Pasha defeated the enemy, killing nearly 2000 of them. In conformity with their usual strategy, straggling and indecisive, the Russians, at the same time that they were thus endeavouring to force the Danube from Turna, tried also to exhibit themselves in apparent strength at Radowan, nearly sixty miles to the right. Suleiman Bey, whose rank was that of a colonel, stormed Radowan, and had the glory of beating the invaders with almost as much slaughter in this place as Sali Pasha had inflicted on them at Nicopolis and Turna. But these reverses of the Russian right might have been expected, when they were weakening it in order to strengthen the divisions destined by them to take Silistria.

The assault on the outworks was so hotly received, that full three weeks elapsed before general Schilders had completed the investment. On the adverse shore he piled up batteries of heavy guns, which maintained a continual bombardment; and with those guns he left his portable hospitals (or ambulances) and his reserves. The forces which he transported over the Danube to form the actual leaguer were not less than 53,000 men, while the garrison mustered 8000 only. His artillery, which was numerous and heavy, has been variously computed. Probably the most effective batteries were those which he directed against the south-

west fronts; and here, indeed, the fire was severe and terrible. On this side the ground rises in a series of platforms, which could not be surrendered to the enemy with safety to the town. They are occupied, therefore, by outworks which are all-important; for, on the day when they are taken, Silistria is virtually taken. The outworks are called respectively Arab Tabia and Illanli. They are of earth. The Turkish artillery protecting them was repeatedly silenced; the walls behind them were repeatedly breached; but, burrowing in the cavities of that redoubt, the indomitable defenders waited only till the thunder of the guns had ceased, and till the tramp of the storming columns made the ground about them tremble, when they appeared swarming out of the bowels of the earth, and—dagger in hand rather than sword in hand—flung themselves upon the assailants.

The Russians in these great assaults—which, as the siege progressed, were conducted in larger and larger force, committed one of the most incredible military blunders on record. They advanced in heavy costume, and even with their knapsacks on their shoulders. They met those, therefore, who soon neutralised and reversed the effects of general Schilders' artillery. The slaughter on these occasions (and from May the 11th to June the 29th they were numerous) is hardly to be believed. Always bearing in mind this species of inter-act, we may describe in one sentence nearly a month's operations before Silistria: to wit, it was alternately bombarded and assaulted. The small Turkish garrison flinched not for a moment. As the earthworks were damaged, it was necessary to repair them; and as the Russians mined (a last resource), it was indispensable to countermine. Enormous hardships and evident risks were to be encountered in these duties. For the most part, the patient Osmanli displayed the spirit of a true soldier.\* But

\* As he smoked, or rather sucked a pipe in which there was no longer any tobacco (the facts have been witnessed), he lay at the bottom of a trench watching, with envy, the better-supplied comrade whose tarboosh rose above the level of the margin—because that comrade worked with the spade, and was therefore on his legs. A cannon-ball sweeps away the red cap and the head within it. The recumbent spectator arises, saying "Allah is great!" He takes the spade



when we say that these noble soldiers flinched not, we would confine our observation to that one month which we have mentioned. At length, they showed signs of flagging. The odds were great; the work was incessant; the fatigue was overpowering; the enemy was near, and seemed every day to increase in power; their friends were distant, and had apparently forgotten them. Four men met this natural depression with, in war, that priceless resource, that resource above all treasures in value—intellectual bravery and thorough-bred resistance. Of these four men one was a German, two were British officers (Lieutenants Nasmyth and Butler), and the last was the heroic Mussa Pasha. This man was destined to save Silistria, but not to know it; to triumph conclusively, completely, gloriously, and not to witness his own success; to win imperishable praise, and die without hearing the first cheer. Butler, Nasmyth, and the Prussian engineer told the Turks that they must not despond because the besiegers were laying powder under the surrounding works. Against those mines other mines could be wrought, and all the enemy's labour would be more than lost; for before they approached near enough to do damage, they would themselves be blown into the air. The Turks took heart again, saying that Allah was indeed great.

On the 11th of May, Silistria itself was assaulted. The assailants were beaten, and lost more than two thousand men. Meanwhile, however, the works were incessantly advanced; and, so convergent were the movements with a view to storm or reduce this great fortress, that the right wing of the general Russian army of occupation was consigned to every mischance; whereas the Turkish left wing, as we have said, was transformed, virtually, into a powerful and dangerous army. On the 21st of May another general assault was repulsed. On the 26th of May the left wing, being now an isolated division of Omer Pasha's force, felt its way east-

from the yet warm hand, disengages the nargilly from the clenched teeth, and fills the brief vacancy—his own tarboosh now surmounting the clay embankment. Soon, the place is again vacant, and a successor, equally intrepid and equally serene, continues the excavation; and in ten minutes it has thus taken, as it were, three generations of valiant Osmanlis to fortify one soldier's post in a bombarded intrenchment, and, while doing so, to smoke one pipeful of Latakia tobacco.

wards, to Turna, Semniza, and Giurgevo—in all which places it found, and severely defeated, the enemy. Some such result Omer Pasha had foreseen, when (if we may use the phrase) he had abandoned this part of his forces to themselves. We must not confound these Turks with the Turks defending, originally, that part of the Danube which, on the other shore, corresponded with the present position of the advancing victors. Quite otherwise; the conquerors had come from the west, not straight across the river; and their “*pivot*” was, properly speaking, Widdin. The Russians persisted in disregarding such casualties; and on the 29th of May, only three days afterwards—a very fatal date to choose for a contest with the Mussulman—Prince Gortchakof and general Schilders ordered a combined assault upon the south-east, the south, and the west fronts of Silistria. Hurled from the breaches, the enemy himself acknowledged that he lost that day between one thousand and two thousand grenadiers. We are convinced that the loss amounted to near five thousand men. They had used thirty thousand in the attack. It was the anniversary of the Turkish conquest of Constantinople. On the 29th of May, 1453, Mahomet II. took forcible possession of that European territory which his descendants were now defending with so much heroism. Two days after the assault just mentioned, the last day in the month (May 31st), the outflanking left wing of the Ottoman army had pushed to Slatina, and there had won another victory; and, indeed, on the previous day, which was the day immediately following the great assault upon Silistria, they had fought a battle at Karakal (through which Slatina is reached in that direction), had taken six field-pieces, and had slain *three thousand* Russians. Truly, the position was growing serious, but Silistria “*must be taken.*”

At the beginning of June, when this unfair, this most cruel contest had lasted more than a month, Omer Pasha, whatever diplomatic arrangements might, or might not, have been made, could resist his own feelings no longer. He would have been no soldier—he would have had for his comrades no bowels of compassion, had he remained still impassive, while beholding so much suffering, so much patience, and so much valour. He was moved; and he moved. On the 4th of June he put 30,000 men in action, and ordered them, with his best

wishes, to do something for Silistria. On that same day he commanded his garrison at Rustchuk to try their fortune against the Russian works on the island of Moka; and the works were completely destroyed. A detachment of the column despatched to the relief of Silistria, entered it on the 5th, partly stealing, partly breaking, through the Russian lines. Mehemet Pasha led this reinforcement. Some of the succouring force were repulsed, and shut out; but they remained near, watching for the next sally. It took place exactly three days afterwards, on the 8th of June. It was by night; and then, over a thousand Russian corpses, about a thousand more of the Turkish reinforcement entered Silistria. On the 13th, five days afterwards, a still more tremendous sortie was effected. Three Russian mines were sprung during the conflict: all their works were destroyed, and the carnage was enormous. At last an end was put to this desolating enterprise. A grand assault (through breaches rendered practicable by the artillery of general Schilders) was ordered for the 28th of June. The Russian soldiers had now been eleven months in the provinces of Turkey, and had never yet seen a Turk's back. They had known nothing but disaster, unvaried even by an episode of success; and, when ordered, on the 28th, to the breaches, stood doggedly in their ranks. Prince Gortchakof, in alarm, adjourned the attack till the next day. He occupied his evening in the composition of a manifesto or proclamation which deserves to live for ever. The principal argument in it was that, if the troops of his majesty the czar did not take Silistria on the next day, *their rations should be stopped*.

Next day came. It is very rare for general officers to be wounded in number. It is foolish, unmilitary, perhaps unmerciful, in them to expose themselves to personal danger, except where an army requires extraordinary encouragement. The Russians were thoroughly discouraged and demoralised. This fact is best shown by the number of general officers killed the next day. Silistria "must be taken;" and when the storming columns on the 29th were mustered for the assault, the gloom in the countenances of the men gave a bad augury of the result. Repulsed twice from the defences, they hesitated to obey when ordered once more to advance. Upon this, Count Orlof, jun., generals Schilders, Gortchakof, and Lüders

placed themselves at the head of the men, crying to them to follow; while Prince Paskievitch rode up to the spot and addressed them partly with reproaches and partly with encouragements. The assault was unsuccessfully renewed, and a murderous carnage took place. General Schilders, not again destined to take a fortress, the capture of which twenty-five years before had been the commencement of his reputation, was struck by a cannon-ball, which carried off his thighs. General Lüders had his jaw struck away; Count Orlof was killed; general Gortchakof was severely, and Prince Paskievitch desperately, wounded. The Turks had not only repelled the assault, but had pursued the assailants up to their very batteries. Some of the relieving column outside had meanwhile alarmed and disordered the Russians in the rear. This practically terminated the siege; for the garrison was again succoured during the confusion of the engagement; and the Russian works were so damaged, that they would have all to be recommenced. Mussa Pasha, struck by a spent ball, died in a few hours. Such was this memorable siege of Silistria, which might be compared with that of Saragossa for the bravery of the defence. We believe we shall not be guilty of exaggeration in saying that, from first to last, the Russians lost, under or near the walls of Silistria, 30,000 men.

They now re-crossed the river, so thoroughly demoralised, that, had there been a sufficient force to pursue them, they must have either laid down their arms, or been annihilated. They retreated from every point towards Fokshani and Birlat; evacuating not only Lesser, but Greater Wallachia. Skender Beg and some of the other Turkish chiefs who commanded in the south-west of the principalities, pursued the enemy at leisure beyond the Aluta. It was only in the Upper Dobrudzha that the czar now held any portion of the farther bank of the Danube.



## CHAPTER LXXVI.

THE RUSSIANS EVACUATE, AND THE AUSTRIANS ENTER, THE PRINCIPALITIES—OPERATIONS IN THE BALTIC—EXPEDITION TO THE CRIMEA—BATTLE OF THE ALMA—SIEGE OF SEBASTOPOL—BATTLES OF BALAKLAVA AND INKERMANN—ATTACK ON PETROPAULOVSKI.

THE allies had by this time assembled, to the number of about 50,000, in Varna and the neighbouring camps; and, as the campaign was finished upon the Danube, they began to meditate some other expedition; and, after many councils of war, it was secretly decided to invade the Crimea, and to attack Sebastopol. Siege-trains were ordered from England and France, transports were prepared, and other preparations were gradually made. But the cholera attacked both the armies and the fleets, which for two months lay prostrate under this dreadful scourge. It cost the English at least 700 men; the French, including those who perished in the fatal excursion through the marshes of the Dobrudsha, must have lost more than 4000. It was in July that the greatest mortality occurred; and the corps which suffered most was that of generals Canrobert and Espinasse, at the bivouac of Kavarlik, near Kustendjeh—the Zouaves being more than decimated.

When Khan Mirza, on the 23rd July, allowed himself to be surprised at Karassu, by the retiring Russians, general Youssouf took his fine corps forwards; and in that one long march 1500 dropped down and died, without counting the regular daily losses. The Austrians, who had seemed constantly on the point of joining the allies, but without ever really joining them, and who were expected to aid the Turks, but never did, now began to muster in large numbers along the confines of Transylvania. During the next month, the discomfited columns of the czar were all behind the Sereth, and Paskievitch and Gortchakof had been borne in litters to Yassy. General Dannenberg assumed the chief command of the routed forces; numerous vacancies had rendered his promotion rapid; and Prince Dolgoruki, who had returned from Persia, was despatched by Nicholas from St. Petersburg, to investigate the causes of so many and such huge calamities. On the 22nd of August, Omer Pasha, seated in an open car-

riage, with Cantacuzene (a name recalling old Byzantine recollections), made his triumphal entry into Bukharest. He published a conciliatory proclamation, and the sultan decreed an amnesty for all treasons committed during a time of terror and military coercion. In the beginning of the following month, the Russian head-quarters were removed from Yassy, and withdrawn behind the Pruth. The expulsion of the invaders was complete: the campaign was finished; and then, and not till then, Count Coronini and his Austrians entered the Principalities, "*to protect*," they said, a territory which had been effectually protected by its own lawful owners, and which these obliging strangers had, in no one particular, assisted in defending.

The French division of the allied fleet passed through the Channel on the 23rd of April, on its way to the Baltic. It consisted of twenty-five sail, nine being ships of the line, and, with the English squadrons, made the whole a fleet of about sixty-seven vessels of war. The navigation of the northern waters was not universally practicable till the middle or the end of May; and even when it was, not much was effected beyond the blockade of the Russian navy, which shrank behind granite fortresses. The latter were too strong and too well protected by narrow and intricate channels to be reduced, except at a disproportionate cost, by a fleet consisting chiefly of large vessels of deep draught. On the 20th a gallant exploit was performed at Hango, two Russian ships being cut out from under the very guns. On the 30th Brahestadt was bombarded, and the next day Uleaborg was destroyed. Prizes of not much importance continued to be sent home. But on the 20th of next month a check was sustained in attempting to land at Gamla Karleby, where we were repulsed with the loss of 54 men, killed or missing. Shortly afterwards the greater part of the fleet—fifty-one sail—were assembled in Baro Sound; and the French and English admirals pressed their respective governments to send them a military force. This was furnished by the French emperor; and 12,000 French troops, under the command of Baraguay d'Hilliers, sailed in the beginning of August on board English ships for the Isles of Aland, which lie across the mouth of the Gulf of Bothnia, half-way between Stockholm and Wirmo, in Finland. On the principal of these islands stood the unfinished fortress of Bomarsund, which was intended, when complete, to accom-

modate a garrison of 60,000 men. Fortunately for Sweden, whose independence was so seriously menaced by this rising Sebastopol of the north, an attack was directed against it on the 8th of August. The soldiers were landed in company with a body of our marines, and under the protection of the united fleets. The nature of the soil obliged them to use earth-bags for their batteries; and in one battery alone there were 15,000 such bags. The conoidal rifle balls of the French sharpshooters soon drove the Russian artillerymen from their casemates, while the walls were breached both by sea and land. The *Leopard* threw 120-pound shot from a distance of 2500 yards; and by these the roof of the principal fort was torn to pieces in a few hours. It was of iron, and underneath the iron there were six feet deep of sand; then granite. On the 15th of August, general Bodisco, having lost his two subsidiary forts, surrendered with 2000 prisoners, who were sent at once to England and to France. The forts were then destroyed; and such was the new and sudden mistrust which the Russians conceived of their boasted defences, that they themselves blew up, a few days afterwards, the fortifications of Hango.

In the Black Sea, meantime, the preparations for the Crimean expedition were pressed forward with greater energy in proportion as the cholera abated. But many successive delays occurred. Originally the invading force was to have sailed on the 15th of August; then the 20th was the day; then the 22nd; then the 26th; then the 1st of September (by which time the French siege-train would have arrived at Varna); then the 2nd of September. At length all was ready; and 58,000, out of 75,000 men, cavalry, infantry, and artillery, were embarked at Baltschik on the 7th. The French numbered 25,000, the English the same; and there was a picked corps of about 8000 Turks. In a flotilla of between two and three hundred vessels, this first and much larger part of the united army were transported up the coast to Fidonisi, or the Island of Serpents; from which point to Cape Tarkan, in the Crimea, they would make both the shortest and the most sheltered passage. Being reviewed and found all ready at Fidonisi, the armada took its second departure on the 11th, and reached without accident the destined shore on the 14th. On that day the troops were landed prosperously

at "Old Fort," some twenty miles beyond Eupatoria, or Khosloff, within four or five easy days' march from Sebastopol. Upon this great fortress the columns were at once directed; while the transports returned in haste to fetch the reserves, amounting to about 15,000 men.

Contrary to the expectation of the allies, Prince Mentchikof, who commanded in the Crimea, had resolved not to oppose their landing, but to await them on the left, or southern, bank of the river Alma. The nature of his position may be gathered from Lord Raglan's despatch. He says:

"In order that the gallantry exhibited by her majesty's troops, and the difficulties they had to meet, may be fairly estimated, I deem it right, even at the risk of being considered tedious, to endeavour to make you acquainted with the position the Russians had taken up.

"It crossed the great road about two miles and a half from the sea, and is very strong by nature.

"The bold and almost precipitous range of heights, of from 350 to 400 feet, that from the sea closely border the left bank of the river, here ceases and formed their left, and turning thence round a great amphitheatre or wide valley, terminates at a salient pinnacle where their right rested, and whence the descent to the plain was more gradual. The front was about two miles in extent.

"Across the mouth of this great opening is a lower ridge at different heights, varying from 60 to 150 feet, parallel to the river, and at distances from it of from 600 to 800 yards.

"The river itself is generally fordable for troops, but its banks are extremely rugged, and in most parts steep; the willows along it had been cut down, in order to prevent them from affording cover to the attacking party, and in fact everything had been done to deprive an assailant of any species of shelter.

"In front of the position on the right bank, at about 200 yards from the Alma, is the village of Burluk, and near it a timber bridge, which had been partly destroyed by the enemy.

"The high pinnacle and ridge before alluded to was the key of the position, and consequently, there the greatest preparations had been made for defence.

"Half-way down the height and across its front was a



trench of the extent of some hundred yards, to afford cover against an advance up the even steep slope of the hill. On the right, and a little retired, was a powerful covered battery, armed with heavy guns, which flanked the whole of the right of the position.

“Artillery, at the same time, was posted at the points that best commanded the passage of the river and its approaches generally.

“On the slopes of these hills (forming a sort of table land) were placed dense masses of the enemy’s infantry, whilst on the heights above was his great reserve, the whole amounting, it is supposed, to between 45,000 and 50,000 men.”

It was against this fortress—for it was little less—the British, French, and Turkish forces were led, having broken up their camp at Kimishi on the 19th of September. The way led along continual steppes, affording no shelter from the burning heat of the sun, nor water to assuage the intolerable thirst suffered by all. The only relief was afforded by the muddy stream of Bulganak, which the men drank with avidity. That day an insignificant skirmish took place between a body of Cossacks and the light division. On passing over the brow of a hill, the former were discovered drawn up in order. A slight fire was opened, which wounded three or four of our men, but a gun drove up and threw a shell with such wonderful precision in the midst of the enemy that above a dozen were knocked over by this one projectile, and the Cossacks speedily disappeared.

The march was continued on the 20th, and about mid-day the allies drew up within sight, but not within range of the enemy. The French were on the right leaning on the sea; their division furthest to the left, under Prince Napoleon, pointing upon the hamlet of Almatamak, and standing nearest to the British right. This consisted of the second division, under Sir De Lacy Evans; supported by the third division, under Sir Richard England. Next on the left stood the light division, led by Sir George Brown; and supported by the Guards and Highlanders, under the Duke of Cambridge. Early in the day, the appearance of Russian cavalry on the left caused Sir George Brown to detach the English horse under Lord Cardigan, and some guns, in that direction,

to keep them in check ; while the rear was protected by the fourth division, under Sir George Cathcart.

It had been arranged between Lord Raglan and marshal St. Arnaud, to turn the Russian position on both flanks. To effect this, general Bosquet, with the Turks under Suleiman Pasha, were to cross the Alma near its confluence with the sea, and, covered by the fire of the in-shore squadron, establish himself on the heights upon the Russian left. While this movement was in progress, the other French divisions were to occupy the attention of the Russian centre ; and when the French operations had succeeded, Sir George Brown was to turn the right with the light division, while the rest of the army swept the Russian centre before them. This plan of attack, it will be seen, was only partly carried out, and the British stormed instead of turning the right wing of the Russians.

The battle, which began about half-past twelve, was fought from right to left. General Bosquet pushed his troops over the Alma at a run ; the Zouaves swarmed up the heights—climbing, leaping, crawling, rather than marching ; and in twenty minutes several thousand Frenchmen were established on the left flank of the Russians. Isolated for a brief time, and exposed to the fire of five batteries, general Bosquet held his ground ; and then general Canrobert, thrusting his division across the river, while Prince Napoleon simultaneously put his brigades in motion, dashed up the rocks and succoured the foremost French. The battle now rolled in its fiery course towards the centre. In the face of an incessant fire from the Russian riflemen on the Alma, the French brigades rushed forward with their accustomed impetuosity, sweeping the sharpshooters before them, and, covered by their artillery, now brought into action, following up the slopes of the hills. Marshal St. Arnaud speedily supported them with his second line ; and the battle on the Russian left was won at two o'clock.

At half-past one P.M. the British light division, composed of the 7th Fusiliers, the 19th, 23rd, 33rd, 77th, and 88th Regiments, with the 2nd battalion of the Rifle Brigade, approached in columns the village of Burluik. The village, which was of some size, but deserted by its inhabitants, was

occupied by Russian riflemen. Between these and our Rifles a fire was at once engaged. Driven back, the Russians set fire to the village, and to heaps of dried dung, which instantly enveloped the whole place in a dense smoke. At this moment the redoubt and Russian batteries opened their fire upon the village, causing the greatest havoc in the British ranks. Sir G. Brown gave command, "Forward," and the light division dashed through the smoking village, followed by the 1st division of the army and part of the 2nd. These were the only English troops actively engaged in the contest; the others arrived, notwithstanding a forced march, when all was over.

Having passed the village, the British deployed in line, amidst the most fearful fire. The Russians had established targets on the line of march, which marked the range of their guns, and insured deadly certainty to their aim. Ten minutes' quick march led to the river, where the cannon actually vomited fire upon the devoted regiments. The Rifles, under major Norcott, waded through the river Alma in a masterly manner, followed by the Connaught Rangers and the other gallant regiments forming the light division. The river once crossed, the men dashed into some vineyards which flanked the high road; but these having been cut down, afforded no shelter. The fire here was fearful, for now the British were within grape range. The men here gave one of those surprising examples of coolness and contempt of danger which forms one of our national characteristics. In the midst of the most tremendous fire which an army has ever encountered, with comrades falling around them, the men commenced seeking for, and plucking the half-ripe grapes, which were hanging temptingly on the hewn vines. The vineyards were passed, and the light division, forming in line, advanced in measured pace up the hills. The hail of grape-shot and of musketry momentarily checked its progress; but now our soldiers opened their deadly volleys into the redoubt. Hundreds fell here on either side; but the skill of our Rifles, and the excellent training of our men, told fearfully in the enemy's ranks. One of our Riflemen knocked over successively thirty-two Russians. After a fearful struggle of one hour the light division pressed up the principal hill, with tremendous cheers, on the redoubt, and entered it. An

officer of the 33rd inscribed his name on a 32-pounder which had caused fearful ravages in the British ranks. The light division followed up the hill, pouring in volley after volley after the retreating Russians.

Here occurred the only check which the troops appeared to have received. The critical moment is thus described by the special correspondent of the *Times* :

“ The British line was struggling through the river and up the heights in masses, firm, indeed, but mowed down by the murderous fire of the batteries, and by grape, round shot, shell, canister, case shot, and musketry, from some of the guns of the central battery, and from an immense and compact mass of Russian infantry. Then commenced one of the most bloody and determined struggles in the annals of war. The 2nd division, led by Sir De L. Evans in the most dashing manner, crossed the stream on the right. The 7th Fusiliers, led by colonel Yea, were swept down by fifties. The 55th, 30th, and 95th, led by brigadier Pennefather, who was in the thickest of the fight, cheering on his men, again and again were checked indeed, but never drew back in their onward progress, which was marked by a fierce roll of Minié musketry ; and brigadier Adams, with the 41st, 47th, and 49th, bravely charged up the hill, and aided them in the battle. Sir George Brown, conspicuous on a grey horse, rode in front of his light division, urging them with voice and gesture. Gallant fellows ! they were worthy of such a gallant chief. The 7th, diminished by one-half, fell back to re-form their columns lost for the time ; the 23rd, with eight officers dead and four wounded, were still rushing to the front, aided by the 19th, 33rd, 77th, and 88th. Down went Sir George in a cloud of dust in front of the battery. He was soon up, and shouted, ‘ 23rd, I’m all right. Be sure I’ll remember this day,’ and led them on again, but in the shock produced by the fall of their chief the gallant regiment suffered terribly while paralysed for a moment. Meantime the Guards, on the right of the light division, and the brigade of Highlanders were storming the heights on the left. Their line was almost as regular as though they were in Hyde Park. Suddenly a tornado of round and grape rushed through from the terrible battery, and a roar of musketry from behind thinned their front ranks by dozens. It was evident that



we were just able to contend against the Russians, favoured as they were by a great position. At this very time an immense mass of Russian infantry were seen moving down towards the battery. They halted. It was the crisis of the day. Sharp, angular, and solid, they looked as if they were cut out of the solid rock. It was beyond all doubt that if our infantry, harassed and thinned as they were, got into the battery they would have to encounter again a formidable fire, which they were but ill calculated to bear. Lord Raglan saw the difficulties of the situation. He asked if it would be possible to get a couple of guns to bear on these masses. The reply was, 'Yes,' and an artillery officer (colonel Dixon) brought up two guns to fire on the Russian squares. The first shot missed, but the next, and the next, and the next cut through the ranks so cleanly, and so keenly, that a clear lane could be seen for a moment through the square. After a few rounds the square became broken, wavered to and fro, broke, and fled over the brow of the hill, leaving behind it six or seven distinct lines of dead, lying as close as possible to each other, marking the passage of the fatal messengers. This act relieved our infantry of a deadly incubus, and they continued their magnificent and fearful progress up the hill. The duke encouraged his men by voice and example, and proved himself worthy of his proud command and of the royal race from which he comes. 'Highlanders,' said Sir C. Campbell, ere they came to the charge, 'don't pull a trigger till you're within a yard of the Russians!' They charged, and well they obeyed their chieftain's wish; Sir Colin had his horse shot under him, but his men took the battery at a bound. The Russians rushed out, and left multitudes of dead behind them. The Guards had stormed the right of the battery ere the Highlanders got into the left, and it is said the Scots Fusilier Guards were the first to enter. The second and light division crowned the heights. The French turned the guns on the hill against the flying masses, which the cavalry in vain tried to cover. A few faint struggles from the scattered infantry, a few rounds of cannon and musketry, and the enemy fled to the south-east, leaving three generals, three guns, 700 prisoners, and 4000 wounded behind them. The battle of the Alma was won. It is won with a loss of nearly 3000 killed and

wounded on our side. The Russians' retreat was covered by their cavalry, but if we had had an adequate force we could have captured many guns and multitudes of prisoners."

It appears from papers found in Prince Mentchikof's carriage, that he had counted on holding his position on the Alma for at least three weeks. He had erected scaffolds from which his ladies might view the military exploits during the period of obstruction he had provided for the invading force, but he was hurried away in the midst of a flying army, in little more than three hours.

Without sufficient cavalry, and having exhausted the ammunition of the artillery, the allies did not pursue the defeated foe; but rested for a couple of days, to recruit the able-bodied, succour the wounded, and bury the dead. Then they went forward towards Sebastopol. A change now took place, as remarkable an incident as any in the campaign. Learning that the enemy had established a work of some force on the Belbek, and that this river could not readily be rendered a means of communication with the fleet, and calculating that preparations would be made for the defence of Sebastopol chiefly on the north side, the commanders resolved to change the line of operations, to turn the whole position of Sebastopol, and establish themselves at Balaklava. After resting for a couple of days, they started on the march, turned to the left after the first night's bivouac, and struck across a woody country, in which the troops had to steer their way by compass; regained an open road from Bagtchesserai to Balaklava; encountered there at Khutor Mackenzia (Mackenzie's Farm) a part of the Russian army, which fled in consternation at the unexpected meeting; and were in possession of Balaklava on the 26th—within four days after leaving the heights above the Alma. Thus an important post was occupied without a blow.

Balaklava is a close port, naturally cut by the waters in the living rock; so deep that the bowsprit of a ship at anchor can almost be touched on shore, so strong that the force possessing it could retain communication with the sea in spite of any enemy. It is a proof of Mentchikof's want of foresight, or of his extreme weakness after the battle of the 20th, that Balaklava was left without effectual defence. The change of operations reminds one of Nelson's manœuvre at the Nile,

in attacking the enemy on the shore side, where the ships were logged with lumber and unprepared for action.

By this date, however, the allies were destined to sustain a grave loss, in the departure of marshal St. Arnaud. The French commander-in-chief had succeeded in three achievements, each one of which would be sufficient to mark the great soldier. He had thrown his forces into the battle on the Alma with all the ardour of which his countrymen are capable, but with that perfect command which the great general alone retains. He had succeeded in exciting the soldierly fire of the French, and yet in preserving the friendliest feelings towards their rivals and allies, the English. He had succeeded in retaining his place on horseback, notwithstanding mortal agonies that would have subdued the courage, or at least the physical endurance, of any other man. Many can meet death, numbers can sustain torture; but the power of holding up in action against the depressing and despairing misgivings of internal maladies, is a kind of resolution which nature confers upon very few indeed, and amongst those very few marshal St. Arnaud will be ranked as one of the most distinguished. He was succeeded in the command of the French army by general Canrobert, and died at sea on the 29th. By this event Lord Raglan became commander-in-chief of the allied forces in the Crimea.

Had marshal St. Arnaud lived, it is hardly to be doubted that he would have attempted to take Sebastopol by the summary process of breaching and storming instead of the slower one of a regular siege. The former plan might have been successful, for it is now known, upon the authority of the Russians themselves, that when the allies first broke ground before the fortress its preparations for resistance were very incomplete. On the other hand, events have too painfully demonstrated that the force with which the siege was undertaken was totally inadequate, both in numbers and weight of metal. It was not sufficient to invest the place on every side, or to hinder the garrison of one of the strongest fortresses in the world from receiving unlimited reinforcements and supplies of all kinds. Hence, to use general Peyronnet Thompson's homely but very apt illustration, the operations before Sebastopol have hitherto been

like the work of drawing a badger out of one end of a box, with an interminable series of badgers entering at the other end.

The position occupied by the English before Sebastopol was to the right of the French, at a distance of six miles from their ships. They held the summit of a ridge, whence at a long range they could fire with some effect on the Russian outworks; but as they descended the slope, their force was broken in two or three parts, while they were exposed to a fire like that which destroyed so many brave men at the Alma. The French, on the left, rested on Cape Chersonese, and were within three miles of their ships, in a position where, though they might suffer from the fire of the garrison, they were protected from the attacks of the Russian army in the field. The attack on the place by the land batteries and by the ships began on the 17th of October. The Russians had closed the entrance to the harbour by sinking two ships of the line and two frigates (they subsequently sank all the rest of their fleet), and the fire of the allied ships at long range produced so very little effect, whilst the casualties sustained by them were so disproportionate to the damage they inflicted, that the experiment was not repeated.

Eight days afterwards the Russians in turn became the assailants. A large reinforcement having been received under Liprandi, that general was detached to the Tchernaya with some 30,000 troops to attack our rear. The peculiarity of the position of the allied army facilitated his efforts. It has already been explained that Balaklava is at some distance from the lines of the besiegers. The road connecting the two runs through a gorge in the heights which constitute the rear of the British position, and which overlook the small grassy plain that lies to the north of the inlet of Balaklava. The possession of the port and the connecting road are essential to the success of the siege. To defend them, Lord Raglan had placed a body of marines and sailors with some heavy guns on the heights above the village and landing-place of Balaklava; beneath the heights he had stationed the 93rd Highlanders, under Sir Colin Campbell, who barred the road down to the village. The plain running northward towards the Tchernaya is intersected by a low irregular ridge,



about two miles and a half from the village, and running nearly at right angles to the rear of the heights on the north-western slopes of which lay the British army. This ridge in the plain was defended by four redoubts, intervening between the Tchernaya and the British cavalry encamped on the southern part of the plain; and the rising ground in their rear was held by the Zouaves, who had intrenched themselves at right angles with the redoubts. The extreme right of our position was on the road to Kamara; the centre about Kadakoi, with the Turkish redoubts in front; the left on the eastern slopes of the high lands running up to the Inkermann ravine.

The object of the Russians was to turn the right and seize Balaklava, burn the shipping in the port, and, cutting off our communication with the sea, establish themselves in our rear. To accomplish this, general Liprandi gathered up his troops behind the defiles at Tchorgun on the Tchernaya. Here, having previously reconnoitred our position, he divided his forces on the morning of the 25th of October, directing one body by the great military road, the other by Kamara, and debouching upon the plain near the Turkish redoubts. The redoubts were armed with two or three heavy ship-guns, and each manned by about 250 Turks. The Russians coming on with the dawn, some 12,000 strong, with from thirty to forty field-guns, attacked the redoubts with horse artillery, and carried them in succession; the Turks firing a few shots, and then flying in disorder under a fire of artillery and the swords of the Cossacks. Sir Colin Campbell, aroused by the firing, instantly drew up the 93rd in front of the village of Kadakoi; and the affrighted Turks rallied for a moment on the flanks of that "living wall of brass," to use the language of a French writer, presented by the Highlanders. But the redoubts being taken, the enemy's artillery advanced and opened fire; and the cavalry came rapidly up. As the 93rd was within range, Sir Colin Campbell drew them a little backward behind the crest of the hill. The British cavalry lay to the left of the Highlanders, and a large body of Russian cavalry menaced both. The larger section went towards the encampment of the British cavalry, and were met at once by the heavy brigade, under general Scarlett. A brief but brilliant encounter followed: for a

moment the Greys and Enniskillens in the first line seemed swallowed up, in another they reappeared victorious. The long dense line of the Russian horse had lapped over their flanks; but the second British line, consisting of the 4th and 5th Dragoons, charging, the Russians were broken and rapidly made off. While this was proceeding, a body of some 400 cavalry rode at the Highlanders, who, not deigning to form square, mounted the crest of the hill, behind which they had taken shelter, fired in line two deep, and sent the enemy flying.

But the fighting was not yet over. Seven guns taken in the redoubts yet remained in the possession of the enemy; and Lord Raglan sent an order to Lord Lucan to prevent the enemy from carrying off the guns, if possible. The order was wrongly interpreted as a peremptory order to *charge*, and in that sense it was repeated by Lord Lucan to Lord Cardigan, who obeyed it and charged into the very centre of the enemy's position, with a desperate sacrifice of men, but not without inflicting severe blows upon the enemy. Nor was the loss of life entirely a waste. To the Russians the incident proved the unmeasured daring of the foe they had to face; to the British troops it showed the lengths to which discipline and fidelity can be carried. The light cavalry brigade mustered 607 sabres that morning; in the twenty minutes occupied by the charge and the return, they lost 335 horses, and had nearly as many officers and men killed or wounded. The heavy dragoons and the Chasseurs d'Afrique covered the retreat of the bleeding remnant of this daring band. It was now nearly noon: the fourth division, under Sir George Cathcart, and the first division, under the Duke of Cambridge, had come up; and the Russians abandoned all the redoubts, except the furthest one to the right. Nothing more was done that day. Looking to the extent of the position previously occupied, Lord Raglan determined to contract his line of defence to the immediate vicinity of Balaklava and the steeps in the right rear of the British army.

Next day the enemy sallied forth from Sebastopol, 7000 or 8000 strong, and attacked the right flank of the British army; but, steadily met by the second division under Sir De Lacy Evans, supported by the brigade of Guards, a regiment

of Rifles, two guns from the light division, and two French battalions, the Russians were gallantly repelled, and then chased down to the slope, with a loss of some 600 killed and wounded, and 80 prisoners.

Another fierce engagement, the most important of all in which the belligerents have yet been engaged, took place on the 5th of November. For some days previously, the Russians, who already possessed a large force in the prolonged fortifications, and others to the rear of the allies in the neighbourhood of Balaklava, had been observed to receive large reinforcements, which, added to Liprandi's corps on the Russian left, of 30,000 or more, and the garrison, would probably justify Lord Raglan's estimate of 60,000 men arrayed against the allies on the memorable 5th of November. To augment the weight of the force brought down to crush the besiegers, the now useless army of the Danube had been withdrawn from Moldavia, leaving Bessarabia still defended by its special army, but not, it is supposed, entirely exhausting the reinforcements to be brought from the interior. The effort of Mentchikof to throw his strength into a succession of powerful and, if possible, decisive blows, is shown by the advance of Dannenberg's army in the very lightest order, augmenting the numbers about Sebastopol without much regard either to their equipment or provision. The aim was to bear down by accumulated pressure; and it was with such a view that the batteries resumed the bombardment of the allies in their besieged camp, a strong force from the garrison moved out to act with Dannenberg's army, and Liprandi made a feint, that might have been, had it succeeded, a penetrating attack towards the rear; and as it was, it did busy a portion of the British and French forces. Thus the allies were to be occupied all round, while the weak, untrenched, and unfortified point in their position towards the valley of the Inkermann was to be penetrated by a force of great weight and momentum.

The British position extends to the termination of the north-eastern heights overlooking the valley of Inkermann, and sloping on the west towards Sebastopol. A road, crossing the Inkermann valley, and the stream by a bridge, runs up the heights into the British rear. A little on its right, a

small redoubt had been constructed for two guns ; but the guns were not in position on the 5th. To the left of the road, as far as the extreme Lancaster battery on our right attack, the ground was broken with ravines and covered with thick brushwood. The greater part of the hill below the two-gun battery was loose and stony ; but within about a hundred yards of the redoubt it becomes tangled and covered with thick brushwood. Facing the hill, and overtopping it on the north, is a corresponding headland. It was this hill, so steep that to take guns up seemed impossible, which the Russians occupied with guns. Across the Inkermann road, about a quarter of a mile from our encampment, and a mile from the two-gun battery, runs a long low stone wall. It was in this position, contracted to a front of about a mile and a half, that the battle of Inkermann was fought.

It was with the earliest dawn, enveloped in mist and rain, that the allies, hearing, without seeing, the movement of the enemy, roused themselves to a comprehension of that which they were to expect. They were attacked in position by troops converging into a narrow and broken ravine or meeting of ravines ; and here, for all the "solidity" ascribed to them by the French commander, the English soldiers were repeatedly driven back. At one time the battle consisted in the play of artillery upon the soldiers of either side ; at another, in sharp conflicts of small arms ; but for the most part of the time in direct personal encounters, where each side tried against the other its weight, muscular strength, nerve, and resolve, perilling body and soul in the determination to kill. The 8000 English, who were repeatedly brought forward to meet the attack, were the same, unrelieved, throughout the day. The narrowness of the channel through which the battle raged prevented the Russians from using their numbers at once, but those numbers gave a command of fresh forces in successive relays. So the conflict continued throughout the day ; the contending bodies swayed backwards and forwards as reinforcements or new resolution lent the greater weight to either side. The arrival of the French first restored something like aggressive equality to the side of the allies ; and at last, English solidity and French fire proved greater than Russian ferocity and numbers.



As the enemy seemed about to make a final effort, the Zouaves and the 30th French Regiment came up and assailed the Russian left.

“This occurred at about eleven o’clock; and from that moment the Russian chance was hopeless. Yet though under the French fire they were literally falling by battalions, they never showed the least signs of trepidation or disorder. On the contrary, they formed up in the most beautiful order, altered their front so as to meet the attack of the French, and extending their line to the left, prepared to resume their attack upon the English. At that time, however, our men were well prepared, and, without any order or arrangement, flung themselves headlong upon the enemy, charging with the bayonet. The Russians boldly charged with the bayonet also, and for the space of five minutes the 30th, 41st, 49th, 88th, and six or seven Russian regiments were stabbing, beating, and firing at each other in the most fearful manner. At last the enemy gave way, and began retreating in good order across the Inkermann heights. Until I saw it, I never in my life could have believed that any troops in the world could have retired under such a murderous fire in such perfect order. The French and English, with a whole mass of artillery, followed close upon the retreating battalions, pouring in volley after volley of grape-shot, shell, and musketry: in fact, it was a perfect carnage. Yet, in spite of this, the enemy kept their order, retreating almost at slow time, and every five or ten minutes halting and charging desperately up the hill at our men and the French. In these charges the Russians lost fearfully. We received them with volleys of musketry, and then dashed at them with the bayonet.”

The battle lasted from dawn until past noon; when the Russians, covering their retreat by a heavy fire, fell back, some to Sebastopol, some across the Inkermann, leaving behind them one of the bloodiest fields ever beheld by a soldier. Its aspect has furnished matter for much eloquent description, but none equals that of Lord Raglan. “I never witnessed such a spectacle before—but on this I will not dwell,”—which implies more from his pen than pages from others. Still some phrases will assist the reader. “The

scene from the two-gun battery was awful,"—for round that spot on the night of the battle the clear moonlight enabled a spectator to see "upwards of five thousand bodies." "Outside the battery, the Russians lay two and three deep: inside, the place was literally full with bodies of Russians, guardsmen, the 55th, and 20th." "They lay in heaps." "This was not the case in one spot, but all over the bloody field." "From the very doors of the tents of the second division over the hills, on the high road, and along the ravine, down to the very valley below the Inkermann ruins, the earth is strewed with dead, wounded, arms and ammunition, clothing, and all the débris of the fight."

The ascertained loss of the English was 2612, including three generals killed and five wounded; that of the French is stated at 1700; and the Russian loss was estimated at not less than 15,000. The proportionate loss of officers in our army was excessive; but we doubt whether it was due entirely to the conspicuous dresses which they wore: their conspicuous acts contributed much more signally to point them out for special attack. Supposing the Russian loss not to be over-estimated, it would about equal that of the allies in proportion to the gross numbers at the command of Prince Mentchikof; so that if the Russians were inferior soldiers, their inferiority at all events exists in a ratio barely exceeding their superiority of numbers. If their bravery was less chivalrous, it was not less stubborn; and the battle of Inkermann has exploded, before hundreds of competent witnesses, the old dogma that hand-to-hand conflicts with the bayonet cannot be. Many times the bayonet was the only weapon with which the swaying multitude was fighting man to man. In one resource the Russians were alone: blindly obedient to the *divine* order of their emperor, assoilzied before the conflict by the blessing of their priests in the churches of Sebastopol, they were licensed to carry the war further than humanity warrants, for the wounded were slaughtered where they lay. Inkermann showed, therefore, that we had nothing to hope for from Russian *incompetency* to use Russian resources, from the wanted of adapted skill on the part of the commanders, of animal bravery in the men; nothing to hope from Russian scruples; and that the conquest of Sebastopol

could only be effected by main strength exercised to overcome the great numbers, the strong position, blind fidelity, and absolute unscrupulousness.

Soon after the news of the battle of Inkermann came that of a truly untoward event on the other side of the globe. In the last week of August half a dozen ships of the allies, looking out for Russian vessels at large in the Pacific, found themselves off the fortified port of Petropaulofski; and with only one steamer amongst them entered upon a bombardment of a Kamtchatkan Algiers, as if they were fully equipped and constituted for the purpose. The fire of the ships kept up for some days, and a partial landing did some damage; but a subsequent attempt to storm the town ended in the repulse of the troops disembarked, with much slaughter; and the fleet retired with a loss of many men and several officers, including the English admiral, killed, it is said, by the accidental discharge of his own pistol. That a fleet of English and French ships should leave their mark is a matter of course; but never was a week worse spent than that off Petropaulofski.

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## CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE SIEGE OF SEBASTOPOL CONTINUED—ACCESSION OF SARDINIA TO THE ANGLO-FRENCH ALLIANCE—DEATH OF THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS—CONFERENCE AT VIENNA—CONCLUSION.

SINCE the battle of Inkermann the fighting before Sebastopol has consisted only of sorties from the place, and attacks upon the besiegers' working parties in the trenches, always repulsed with comparatively little loss on either side. Perils more fatal than Russian shot or steel began now to deal havoc among the allies, the British troops being the chief sufferers. The expedition to the Crimea had been undertaken with most inadequate means, and without due caution or sufficient inquiry into the nature and extent of the resistance to be expected from the enemy. Thus rashly begun, it was still worse conducted—by our government at least. The hideous mismanagement which prevailed in every de-

partment of the service almost annihilated our army, so that although reinforcements were sent to it as fast as our bewildered ministers could contrive to forward them, several months elapsed before our effective strength was made fairly adequate to the ordinary duties in the trenches, for the new arrivals died off still more rapidly than their predecessors from the effects of bad and insufficient food, want of clothing, shelter, and medical care, and continual overwork. The details of these disasters and of their causes belong, not to the history of Russia, but to that of England, in whose social and political institutions they are likely to lead to important modifications.

Whilst the heroic armies of France and England were rotting before Sebastopol in expiation of the sins of their governments, there was no pause to the labours of diplomacy, nor much result from them. Russia continued her delusive demonstrations in that field in order to gain time, and to prevent the German powers from siding with her opponents. Austria, professing her approval of the cause of the Western Powers, clung to every faint hope of peace with a tenacity which her position in political geography sufficiently explains, for any war would be for her the risk of absolute destruction. She would find her minimum of risk in siding with us; but peace at any price is a policy for Austria alone in the whole world. There appears no reason to charge her with bad faith to France and England; but to Prussia that charge is brought home by clear and accumulated evidence. She is the secret ally of Russia, and in her dealings with the rest of Europe she stands convicted of a repetition of that duplicity of which she once reaped the fruits at Jena. But whilst Russia falters and Austria falters, England and France have found a frank ally in Sardinia, which has engaged to furnish and maintain at her own cost a contingent of fifteen thousand men to the allied army in the Crimea. The first instalment of that contingent has already arrived at the scene of action.

On the 2nd of March, 1855, the electric telegraph startled all Europe with the news that the Emperor Nicholas had expired at noon that day of pulmonary apoplexy. For once there appears no reason to doubt that the death of a Russian emperor has been officially ascribed to its true cause. The



health of Nicholas had long been in a precarious state, and an English physician, Doctor Granville, had written to Lord Palmerston about the time when the war was declared, stating his conviction that the emperor's life was not worth a year's purchase. The toils and anxieties in which he was latterly involved might have broken down a stronger constitution than that of Nicholas, for in his stalwart frame there was a hereditary taint which had manifested itself in other members of his family, sometimes in the form of insanity, sometimes in that of erysipelas or other maladies. Besides, the fact is not less certain than it is ludicrous, that he had habitually practised tight-lacing to such a degree, that he often fainted when he ungirthed himself for sleep. The tendency to congestion of the lungs, which at last proved fatal to him, was the natural result of that despicable display of vanity.

Had Nicholas died a year or two sooner, the world would have been spared much suffering. Happening when it did, his death was an event of no political importance whatever. He died in his fifty-ninth year, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander II., whose character is said to resemble that of his uncle and namesake.

Fondly imagining that a new reign would be the inauguration of a new Russian policy, the diplomatic representatives of Austria, France, and Great Britain again met those of Russia in conference at Vienna. Turkey was also represented there; but Prussia was very justly excluded. The whole story of this elaborate hoax, played off by Russia on the credulous governments of the West, is now before the world in the "Papers relating to the Negotiations at Vienna on the Eastern Question," giving the proceedings from the 15th of March to the 26th of April, in protocols which record stipulations upon special points and report the discussions of the plenipotentiaries on the whole subject, with great point and spirit. The discussion—sometimes it may be called almost altercation—is animated and dramatic. The *dramatis personæ* at the commencement are Buol Schauenstein and Prokesch Osten for Austria, Bourqueney for France, Westmoreland for England, Gortchakof and Titoff for Russia, Aarif Effendi for Turkey; to whom entered subsequently Lord John Russell for England, Drouyn de Lhuys for France, and Aali Pasha for the Porte.

The conferences start from the memorandum communicated by the plenipotentiaries of Austria, France, and Great Britain to Prince Gortchakof on the 28th December, setting forth "the four points" with much greater distinctness and force than they had been expressed in previous indications of the objects sought by the allies. If these four points had been granted, Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia would have been secured in their local independence, under the suzerainty of the Porte, with the collective guarantee of the *five* powers; the Danube would have been placed as to its control and care under a syndicate; the Ottoman Porte would have been recognised as forming a member of the European comity; the preponderance of Russia in the Black Sea would have been terminated; and the Christian subjects of Turkey would have received a confirmation of their immunities, without distinction of sect, under the friendly observation of the five powers. These were the objects to which the three powers pledged their adhesion, and to which Turkey gave her sanction.

In the conference, however, the representatives of the several powers assumed very different positions, which only became fully developed when the discussion reached the third point. The indications of diversity were shown at the earliest stages; but it was here that they started into their full antagonism. Aarif Effendi, whom we may guess to be a reserved Asiatic, takes a quiet position, submitting to the suggestions of the allied powers, though not slavishly, and not professing to have full authority from his government. When Aali Pasha arrives the language is changed: although he still holds authority *ad referendum*, he takes his share in the discussion, shapes particular propositions according to the Turkish point of view, and evidently to the convenience of the allies; and when Russia grows insolent, as she often does in the mouth of both her plenipotentiaries, Aali Pasha replies with spirit: there is the edge of the scimitar in his words. Lord John Russell often suggests original points, but usually exercises a clear and sound judgment on the merits of different propositions, with a firm adhesion to the principles upon which the Western Powers stand, and a useful copiousness of historical illustration. If the Russians find difficulties in the want of precedent or analogy, the historian

of the peace of Utrecht has an instance at hand, and commonly an instance with a moral to it highly pertinent to the occasion. The Earl of Westmoreland, who had respectably kept up the representations of our Foreign-office, agrees in the sentiments of Lord John Russell. De Bourqueney is to France what Westmoreland is to England; only French individualism will assert itself, and De Bourqueney sometimes hazards originality. The character of the Austrian ministers is contrasted; and the diversity which has been observed between them is perhaps not without some force as evidence that the Austrian statesmen were in earnest. Count Buol places the case of the allies with great distinctness, sums up their proposals in an able condensation that loses nothing of their spirit, and puts their arguments well as against Russia; but he is persuasive rather than peremptory, is disposed to be conciliatory on all sides, sees force in the Western demands, and describes "elements" of discussion in the Russian proposals. Prokesch Osten carried into the conference the rougher and more powerful eloquence which he had already exhibited in the Germanic diet. If the Russian plenipotentiaries are insidious and insolent, Prokesch can return their impertinence upon themselves. For instance, when Russia proposed that the powers should have the opportunity of coming to the aid of Turkey if she call for help,—a Russian minister having already hinted that Turkish territory might have been defended against British aggression at Aden,—Lord John Russell gravely reminds the assembly that the danger of aggression comes from Russia, not England; but Baron Prokesch retorts upon the Russian, that to defend Turkey Russia must be powerful in her navy, and thus the proposal would tend to perpetuate the very danger which they sought to avert. The Russian plenipotentiaries are the braves of the drama. Prince Gortchakof superciliously meets the offer that Russia shall take the initiative on the third point, by drily announcing that his instructions, after eighteen days' delay, do not enable him to make a proposition. After having adopted "the four points," he proposes that the questions of supremacy in the Black Sea be left as the subject of direct communication between Russia and Turkey alone; consents that Turkey shall have the privilege of calling for the assistance of other

powers if she wants it; in short, stultifies the whole consideration of the four points, and insolently pretends that Russia has fulfilled her pledges by taking them into consideration at all. Gortchakof sneers at England for holding Aden, once a Turkish post; and sneers at the independence which Turkey exhibits under the patronage of her allies. The speeches of Titoff are one continued sneer of smooth hypocrisy, heightening rather than covering impertinence under a thin gloss of over-studied courtesy.

The only remains of the Vienna conferences consist in the last Russian project, reversing her former proposal. The effect of the former would have been to make the Black Sea a theatre of more crowded war, by admitting all armed ships: the latter leaves matters exactly as they were at first, except that the allies get a paper guarantee of the *status quo*; while Russia has obtained, by experiment, a proof that her designs and encroachments, even when detected and undisguised, encounter no effectual resistance; but she stands, and moves the paramount power in Europe, supreme in Germany, unchallenged until she comes to France and the few countries that lie beyond the sea or the Pyrenees.

No one can rise from the perusal of the Eastern papers without a strong conviction that the troubles of Europe, and the labours if not the difficulties of this country, are beginning rather than terminating. We have evidently made no way towards the attainment of the objects for which the alliance of the Western Powers were formed; but we have committed ourselves to the pursuit of those objects, unless we are prepared to confess that our power has declined and is declining. We cannot draw back. Russia is less than ever prepared to yield. Austria is not ready to take our side in the conflict. Such appear to us to be the most conspicuous and strongly-established conclusions of the papers. Besides this, the resignation of Count Nesselrode, to be succeeded as chief minister by Prince Yermolof, one of the heads of the Muscovite party, implies that Russia is as resolute to make no concessions as when Prince Gortchakof mocked the Vienna conference with his propositions, and she is prepared for a more vigorous battling with arms. It behoves us, then, to confront the situation under these circumstances, and to be prepared for the next move which may give us advantages that



we have forfeited by mistakes down to the commencement of the present month (May, 1855). If we turn to the Crimea, we find that not only have the besiegers made no impression on Sebastopol, but even that the fortress is stronger at all points than when they first sat down before it. On the other hand, Russia, as a naval power, has been reduced to a nonentity, and her loss of men has been ten times greater than our own. "I have here," said Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords on the 14th of May, "a statement, as to which I can mention no names, but which is one made on the very highest authority; and from this it appears, that a few days before the death of the emperor Nicholas, a return was made up stating that 170,000 Russians had died; and according to a supplementary return, furnished some days later, 70,000 were added to the list, making a total loss of 240,000 men." Again, the allied armies are constantly receiving fresh accessions of strength from without, and the causes of their inherent weakness have been in a great measure removed. On the 28th of April, general Canrobert announces with pleasure to the emperor of the French, that "the English army, always so solid, has become as fine and healthy as it was in the first days of its arrival in the East. It is receiving reinforcements in infantry, in cavalry, and in means of transport. I continue to live on the most cordial terms with Lord Raglan, and the two armies continue to be closely united, and count one upon the other." Since he wrote this, general Canrobert has ceased to be commander-in-chief of the French army, and is succeeded by general Pelissier, whose striking career in Algeria is a guarantee that his command will be distinguished by greater vigour.

While we write, the bombardment of Sebastopol is suspended, and measures appear to be in progress for an expedition to some other part of the Crimea. We will not venture to predict that Sebastopol will be taken by storm, though we have yet to learn that the decided advance made by both French and English will not lead to that result; but we are confident that in one way or another Sebastopol will fall, whether the allies persevere in the siege, or adopt the policy so consonant with the views of military authorities, of carrying the contest to the field. In fine, we look with unabated

hope to the issue of this great contest, and conclude in the following words of an able man and eloquent writer:\*

“We have nothing to repine at. Whatever is right. Had we taken Sebastopol by a sudden rush after the battle of the Alma, we should have vain-glorified ourselves on what we had not as well as on what we had and have. The grand and indomitable courage of our people would have overshadowed our short-comings, and we should have gone on in the belief that our system was a perfect one, till at some future time we should have plunged into a similar series of blunders, possibly with less favourable circumstances to retrieve them. ‘Our noble army of martyrs’ has indeed bled for us; but, alas! it is only by the blood of martyrs that the regeneration of a people can be wrought out. Grievous though it be, we have reason to be thankful that such martyrs are found amongst our ranks. Had our people been of low caste and only remarkable for obedience to orders, they might, under skilful generals, have achieved victories as do Indian sippahees; but the permanence of our nation would in such case have depended upon individual men; we should have been as the people of Thebes, whose glory rose—and fell—with Epaminondas and Pelopidas. But it is not so. Whether with or without generals, whether as an army or as a crowd, the heroism is in the mass; and, as with the Greeks of Thermopylæ—whether that be history or fable—the heroism only becomes extinct with the death of the last weapon-wielder. Disasters, defeats, miseries, nothing can baffle such a people—only extinction—an extinction preferable to living the life of serfs. England and France represent the world’s progress, side by side with enlightened, wise Sardinia. Russia represents the dark ages in their death-throes; while Prussia and Austria, balancing sinister and dexter, ‘let I dare not wait upon I would.’

“Had the allies made a brilliant success, the foeman and the world might have called it a happy chance on one side against misfortunes on the other: but the process has been slow and sure. Never have the Russians stood their ground against the allies in fair fight. They have burrowed in their earth and stone, and the process has been as that of drawing

\* W. Bridges Adams, *Spectator*, May 19, 1855.

a badger, the severest of all trials of the tenacity and endurance of well-trained dogs. Sebastopol has been the treasure-house of war. There have been gathered together the stores and munitions of a score and a half of years, destined for the conquest of Constantinople. The value of that treasure has changed the Scythian policy of retreating and destroying before an advancing enemy. The armament intended for the Dardanelles is consuming day by day in wrath and despair; and even were the siege sure to be now abandoned, the hope of success against Turkey must be postponed for two generations. When Sebastopol can no longer be maintained, the destruction of their fleet and the last remnant of their war-gear will precede the snarling retreat of the baffled Scythians; who will fly howling across the neck of Perekop, adding another to the many proofs that, numerous though they be, they cannot concentrate their numbers to any useful effect against the men of England and France; who will settle down and make a thriving colony of freemen on the soil where the Russ kept only serfs, after robbing it by main force from its former owners. At the outset the allies proclaimed their intentions not to make any territorial aggrandisement. It is quite compatible with that promise to set up new nations under their guarantee, to break the heart and wither the grasp of despotic Russia, and drive her back into her howling wilderness, till the energies of those who have fought to retain Sebastopol shall begin to prompt the question, whether successful freedom be not a better thing for them and theirs than unsuccessful despotism? After all, it is not against Russians that we combat, but against the evil principle that crushes and makes powerless the Russians themselves. Russia must be broken into fragments ere she can grow into a form of beauty. But for her own aggression this painful operation might have been postponed yet awhile; but she has sown the wind and must reap the whirlwind."

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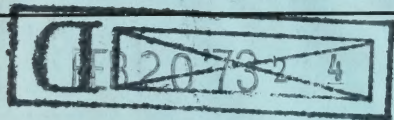




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